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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

By EDWARD GIBBON, Esq;

VOLUME THE ELEVENTH.

A NEW EDITION.

BASIL:

PRINTED BY J. J. TOURNEISEN.

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MCCCLXXIX

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ELEVENTH VOLUME

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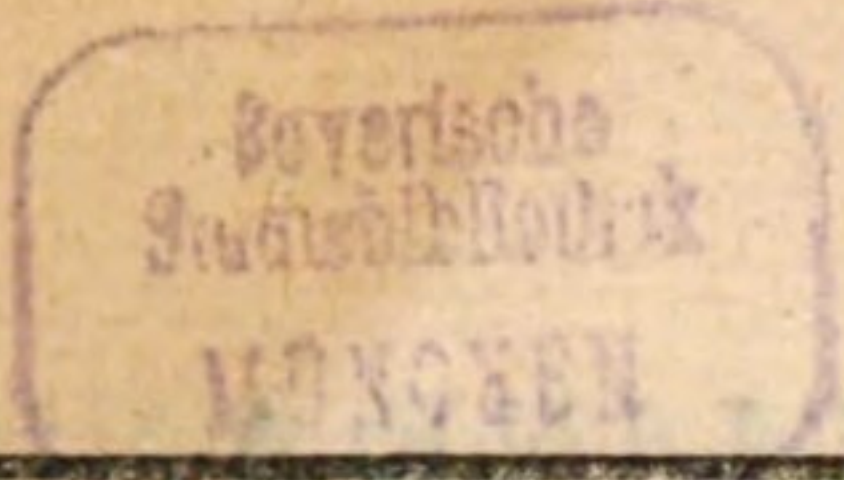
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CHAP. LXVII.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAP. LX.

Schism of the Greeks and Latins. — State of Constantinople. — Revolt of the Bulgarians. — Isaac Angelus dethroned by his Brother Alexius. — Origin of the Fourth Crusade. — Alliance of the French and Venetians with the Son of Isaac. — Their naval Expedition to Constantinople. — The two Sieges and final Conquest of the City by the Latins.

THE restoration of the Western empire by Charlemagne, was speedily followed by the separation of the Greek and Latin churches¹. A religious and national animosity still divides the two largest communions of the Christian world; and the schism of Constantinople, by alienating her most

CHAP.
LX.
Schism of
the Greeks.

2 THE DECLINE AND FALL

C H A P. useful allies and provoking her most dangerous
LX. enemies, has precipitated the decline and fall of
 the Roman empire in the East.

Their aver-
 sion to the
 Latins.

In the course of the present history, the aver-
 sion of the Greeks for the Latins has been often
 visible and conspicuous. It was originally derived
 from the disdain of servitude, inflamed, after the
 time of Constantine, by the pride of equality or
 dominion; and finally exasperated by the pre-
 ference which their rebellious subjects had given
 to the alliance of the Franks. In every age, the
 Greeks were proud of their superiority in profane
 and religious knowledge: they had first received
 the light of Christianity; they had pronounced
 the decrees of the seven general councils: they
 alone possessed the language of scripture and phi-
 losophy; nor should the Barbarians, immersed in
 the darkness of the West², presume to argue on
 the high and mysterious questions of theological
 science. Those Barbarians despised in their turn
 the restless and subtle levity of the Orientals, the
 authors of every heresy; and blessed their own
 simplicity, which was content to hold the tradi-
 tion of the apostolic church. Yet in the seventh
 century, the synods of Spain, and afterwards of
 France, improved or corrupted the Nicene creed,
 on the mysterious subject of the third person of
 the Trinity³. In the long controversies of the
 East, the nature and generation of Christ had
 been scrupulously defined; and the well-known
 relation of father and son seemed to convey a
 faint image to the human mind. The idea of

Procession of
 the Holy
 Ghost.

birth was less analogous to the Holy Spirit, who, instead of a divine gift or attribute, was considered by the Catholics, as a substance, a person, a god; he was not begotten, but in the orthodox style he *proceeded*. Did he proceed from the Father alone, perhaps *by* the Son? or from the Father and the Son? The first of these opinions was asserted by the Greeks; the second by the Latins; and the addition to the Nicene creed of the word *filioque*, kindled the flame of discord between the Oriental and the Gallic churches. In the origin of the dispute, the Roman pontiffs affected a character of neutrality and moderation⁴: they condemned the innovation, but they acquiesced in the sentiment, of their Transalpine brethren: they seemed desirous of casting a veil of silence and charity over the superfluous research; and in the correspondence of Charlemagne and Leo the third, the pope assumes the liberality of a statesman, and the prince descends to the passions and prejudices of a priest⁵. But the orthodoxy of Rome spontaneously obeyed the impulse of her temporal policy; and the *filioque*, which Leo wished to erase, was transcribed in the symbol and chaunted in the liturgy of the Vatican. The Nicene and Athanasian creeds are held as the Catholic faith, without which none can be saved; and both Papists and Protestants must now sustain and return the anathemas of the Greeks, who deny the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, as well as from the Father. Such articles of faith are not susceptible of treaty; but the

C H A P.

LX.

Variety of
ecclesiastical
discipline.

4 THE DECLINE AND FALL

C H A P. rules of discipline will vary in remote and independent churches; and the reason, even of divines, might allow, that the difference is inevitable and harmless. The craft or superstition of Rome has imposed on her priests and deacons the rigid obligation of celibacy; among the Greeks, it is confined to the bishops; the loss is compensated by dignity or annihilated by age; and the parochial clergy, the papas, enjoy the conjugal society of the wives whom they have married before their entrance into holy orders. A question concerning the *Azyms* was fiercely debated in the eleventh century, and the essence of the Eucharist was supposed in the East and West, to depend on the use of leavened or unleavened bread. Shall I mention in a serious history the furious reproaches that were urged against the Latins, who, for a long while remained on the defensive? They neglected to abstain, according to the apostolical decree, from things strangled, and from blood: they fasted, a Jewish observance! on the Saturday of each week: during the first week of Lent they permitted the use of milk and cheese⁶; their infirm monks were indulged in the taste of flesh; and animal grease was substituted for the want of vegetable oil: the holy chrism or unction in baptism, was reserved to the episcopal order: the bishops, as the bridegrooms of their churches, were decorated with rings; their priests shaved their faces, and baptized by a single immersion. Such were the crimes which provoked the zeal of the patriarchs of Constan-

tinople; and which were justified with equal zeal by the doctors of the Latin church ?

C H A P.

LX.

Bigotry and national aversion are powerful magnifiers of every object of dispute; but the immediate cause of the schism of the Greeks may be traced in the emulation of the leading prelates, who maintained the supremacy of the old metropolis superior to all, and of the reigning capital, inferior to none, in the Christian world. About the middle of the ninth century, Photius^s, an ambitious layman, the captain of the guards and principal secretary, was promoted by merit and favour to the more desirable office of patriarch of Constantinople. In science, even ecclesiastical science, he surpassed the clergy of the age; and the purity of his morals has never been impeached: but his ordination was hasty, his rise was irregular; and Ignatius, his abdicated predecessor, was yet supported by the public compassion and the obstinacy of his adherents. They appealed to the tribunal of Nicholas the first, one of the proudest and most aspiring of the Roman pontiffs, who embraced the welcome opportunity of judging and condemning his rival of the East. Their quarrel was embittered by a conflict of jurisdiction over the king and nation of the Bulgarians; nor was their recent conversion to Christianity of much avail to either prelate, unless he could number the proselytes among the subjects of his power. With the aid of his court the Greek patriarch was victorious; but in the furious contest he deposed in his turn the successor of St.

Ambitious
quarrels of
Photius, pa-
triarch of
Constanti-
nople, with
the popes.

A. D./

857—886.

6 THE DECLINE AND FALL

CHAP.

LX.

Peter, and involved the Latin church in the reproach of heresy and schism. Photius sacrificed the peace of the world to a short and precarious reign: he fell with his patron, the Cæsar Bardas; and Basil the Macedonian performed an act of justice in the restoration of Ignatius, whose age and dignity had not been sufficiently respected. From his monastery, or prison, Photius solicited the favour of the emperor by pathetic complaints and artful flattery; and the eyes of his rival were scarcely closed, when he was again restored to the throne of Constantinople. After the death of Basil, he experienced the vicissitudes of courts and the ingratitude of a royal pupil: the patriarch was again deposed, and in his last solitary hours he might regret the freedom of a secular and studious life. In each revolution, the breath, the nod, of the sovereign had been accepted by a submissive clergy; and a synod of three hundred bishops was always prepared to hail the triumph, or to stigmatize the fall, of the holy, or the execrable, Photius. By a delusive promise of succour or reward, the popes were tempted to countenance these various proceedings; and the synods of Constantinople were ratified by their epistles or legates. But the court and the people, Ignatius and Photius, were equally adverse to their claims; their ministers were insulted or imprisoned; the procession of the Holy Ghost was forgotten; Bulgaria was for ever annexed to the Byzantine throne; and the schism was prolonged by their rigid censure of all the multiplied ordi-

nations of an irregular patriarch. The darkness and corruption of the tenth century suspended the intercourse, without reconciling the minds, of the two nations. But when the Norman sword restored the churches of Apulia to the jurisdiction of Rome, the departing flock was warned, by a petulant epistle of the Greek patriarch, to avoid and abhor the errors of the Latins. The rising majesty of Rome could no longer brook the insolence of a rebel; and Michael Cerularius was excommunicated in the heart of Constantinople by the pope's legates. Shaking the dust from their feet, they deposited on the altar of St. Sophia a direful anathema¹⁰, which enumerates the seven mortal heresies of the Greeks, and devotes the guilty teachers, and their unhappy sectaries, to the eternal society of the devil and his angels. According to the emergencies of the church and state, a friendly correspondence was sometimes resumed; the language of charity and concord was sometimes affected; but the Greeks have never recanted their errors; the popes have never repealed their sentence: and from this thunderbolt we may date the consummation of the schism. It was enlarged by each ambitious step of the Roman pontiffs: the emperors blushed and trembled at the ignominious fate of their royal brethren of Germany; and the people was scandalized by the temporal power and military life of the Latin clergy¹¹.

C H A P.
LX.

The popes excommunicate the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Greeks, A. D. 1054, July 16.

The aversion of the Greeks and Latins was nourished and manifested in the three first expe-

Enmity of the Greeks and Latins,

8 THE DECLINE AND FALL

C H A P.
LX.
A. D.
1100—1200.

ditions to the Holy Land. Alexius Comnenus contrived the absence at least of the formidable pilgrims: his successors, Manuel and Isaac Angelus, conspired with the Moslems for the ruin of the greatest princes of the Franks; and their crooked and malignant policy was seconded by the active and voluntary obedience of every order of their subjects. Of this hostile temper, a large portion may doubtless be ascribed to the difference of language, dress, and manners, which severs and alienates the nations of the globe. The pride, as well as the prudence, of the sovereign, was deeply wounded by the intrusion of foreign armies, that claimed a right of traversing his dominions and passing under the walls of his capital: his subjects were insulted and plundered by the rude strangers of the West; and the hatred of the pusillanimous Greeks was sharpened by the secret envy of the bold and pious enterprises of the Franks. But these profane causes of national enmity were fortified and inflamed by the venom of religious zeal. Instead of a kind embrace, an hospitable reception from their Christian brethren of the East, every tongue was taught to repeat the names of schismatic and heretic, more odious to an orthodox ear than those of pagan and infidel: instead of being loved for the general conformity of faith and worship, they were abhorred for some rules of discipline, some questions of theology, in which themselves or their teachers might differ from the Oriental church. In the crusade of Louis the seventh, the Greek clergy

washed and purified the altars which had been defiled by the sacrifice of a French priest. The companions of Frederic Barbarossa deplore the injuries which they endured, both in word and deed, from the peculiar rancour of the bishops and monks. Their prayers and sermons excited the people against the impious Barbarians; and the patriarch is accused of declaring, that the faithful might obtain the redemption of all their sins by the extirpation of the schismatics¹². An enthusiast, named Dorotheus, alarmed the fears, and restored the confidence, of the emperor, by a prophetic assurance, that the German heretic, after assaulting the gate of Blachernes, would be made a signal example of the divine vengeance. The passage of these mighty armies were rare and perilous events; but the crusades introduced a frequent and familiar intercourse between the two nations, which enlarged their knowledge, without abating their prejudices. The wealth and luxury of Constantinople demanded the productions of every climate: these imports were balanced by the art and labour of her numerous inhabitants; her situation invites the commerce of the world; and, in every period of her existence, that commerce has been in the hands of foreigners. After the decline of Amalphi, the Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese, introduced their factories and settlements into the capital of the empire: their services were rewarded with honours and immunities; they acquired the possession of lands and houses; their families were multiplied

The Latins
at Constanti-
nople:

C H A P.

LX.

by marriages with the natives; and, after the toleration of a Mahometan mosch, it was impossible to interdict the churches of the Roman rite¹³. The two wives of Manuel Comnenus¹⁴ were of the race of the Franks; the first, a sister-in law of the emperor Conrad; the second, a daughter of the prince of Antioch: he obtained for his son Alexius a daughter of Philip Augustus king of France; and he bestowed his own daughter on a marquis of Montferrat, who was educated and dignified in the palace of Constantinople. The Greek encountered the arms, and aspired to the empire, of the West; he esteemed the valour, and trusted the fidelity, of the Franks¹⁵; their military talents were unfitly recompensed by the lucrative offices of judges and treasurers, the policy of Manuel had solicited the alliance of the pope; and the popular voice accused him of a partial bias to the nation and religion of the Latins¹⁶. During his reign, and that of his successor Alexius, they were exposed at Constantinople to the reproach of foreigners, heretics, and favourites; and this triple guilt was severely expiated in the tumult, which announced the return and elevation of Andronicus¹⁷. The people rose in arms; from the Asiatic shore the tyrant dispatched his troops and gallies to assist the national revenge; and the hopeless resistance of the strangers served only to justify the rage, and sharpen the daggers, of the assassins. Neither age, nor sex, nor the ties of friendship or kindred, could save the victims of national hatred, and avarice, and religious zeal:

their massacre,

A. D. 1183.

the Latins were slaughtered in their houses and in the streets; their quarter was reduced to ashes; the clergy was burnt in their churches, and the sick in their hospitals; and some estimate may be formed of the slain from the clemency which sold above four thousand Christians in perpetual slavery to the Turks. The priests and monks were the loudest and most active in the destruction of the schismatics; and they chaunted a thanksgiving to the Lord, when the head of a Roman cardinal, the pope's legate, was severed from his body, fastened to the tail of a dog, and dragged, with savage mockery, through the city. The more diligent of the strangers had retreated, on the first alarm, to their vessels, and escaped through the Hellespont from the scene of blood. In their flight, they burnt and ravaged two hundred miles of the sea coast; inflicted a severe revenge on the guiltless subjects of the empire; marked the priests and monks as their peculiar enemies; and compensated, by the accumulation of plunder, the loss of their property and friends. On their return, they exposed to Italy and Europe the wealth and weakness, the perfidy and malice, of the Greeks, whose vices were painted as the genuine characters of heresy and schism. The scruples of the first crusaders had neglected the fairest opportunities of securing, by the possession of Constantinople, the way to the Holy Land: a domestic revolution invited, and almost compelled, the French and Venetians to atchieve the conquest of the Roman empire of the East.

C H A P.

LX.

Reign and
character of
Isaac Ange-
lus.

A. D.

1185—1195,

Sept. 12.

In the series of the Byzantine princes, I have exhibited the hypocrisy and ambition, the tyranny and fall, of Andronicus, the last male of the Comnenian family who reigned at Constantinople. The revolution, which cast him headlong from the throne, saved and exalted Isaac Angelus¹⁸, who descended by the females from the same Imperial dynasty. The successor of a second Nero might have found it an easy task to deserve the esteem and affection of his subjects: they sometimes had reason to regret the administration of Andronicus. The sound and vigorous mind of the tyrant was capable of discerning the connection between his own and the public interest; and while he was feared by all who could inspire him with fear, the unsuspected people, and the remote provinces, might bless the inexorable justice of their master. But his successor was vain and jealous of the supreme power, which he wanted courage and abilities to exercise; his vices were pernicious, his virtues (if he possessed any virtues) were useless, to mankind; and the Greeks, who imputed their calamities to his negligence, denied him the merit of any transient or accidental benefits of the times. Isaac slept on the throne, and was awakened only by the sound of pleasure: his vacant hours were amused by comedians and buffoons, and even to these buffoons the emperor was an object of contempt; his feasts and buildings exceeded the examples of royal luxury; the number of his eunuchs and domestics amounted to twenty thousand; and a

daily sum of four thousand pounds of silver would swell to four millions sterling the annual expence of his household and table. His poverty was relieved by oppression; and the public discontent was inflamed by equal abuses in the collection, and the application, of the revenue. While the Greeks numbered the days of their servitude, a flattering prophet, whom he rewarded with the dignity of patriarch, assured him of a long and victorious reign of thirty-two years; during which he should extend his sway to mount Libanus, and his conquests beyond the Euphrates. But his only step towards the accomplishment of the prediction, was a splendid and scandalous embassy to Saladin¹⁹, to demand the restitution of the holy sepulchre, and to propose an offensive and defensive league with the enemy of the Christian name. In these unworthy hands, of Isaac and his brother, the remains of the Greek empire crumbled into dust. The island of Cyprus, whose name excites the ideas of elegance and pleasure, was usurped by his namesake, a Comnenian prince: and by a strange concatenation of events, the sword of our English Richard bestowed that kingdom on the house of Lusignan, a rich compensation for the loss of Jerusalem.

The honour of the monarchy, and the safety of the capital, were deeply wounded by the revolt of the Bulgarians and Walachians. Since the victory of the second Basil, they had supported, above an hundred and seventy years, the loose dominion of the Byzantine princes; but

CHAP.
LX.

Revolt of the
Bulgarians.
A. D. 1186.

CHAP. LX. no effectual measures had been adopted to impose the yoke of laws and manners on these savage tribes. By the command of Isaac, their sole means of subsistence, their flocks and herds, were driven away, to contribute towards the pomp of the royal nuptials; and their fierce warriors were exasperated by the denial of equal rank and pay in the military service. Peter and Asan, two powerful chiefs, of the race of the ancient kings²⁰, asserted their own rights and the national freedom: their dæmoniac impostors proclaimed to the crowd, that their glorious patron St. Demetrius had for ever deserted the cause of the Greeks; and the conflagration spread from the banks of the Danube to the hills of Macedonia and Thrace. After some faint efforts, Isaac Angelus and his brother acquiesced in their independence; and the Imperial troops were soon discouraged by the bones of their fellow-soldiers, that were scattered along the passes of mount Hæmus. By the arms and policy of John or Joannices, the second kingdom of Bulgaria was firmly established. The subtle Barbarian sent an embassy to Innocent the third, to acknowledge himself a genuine son of Rome in descent and religion²¹; and humbly received from the pope, the licence of coining money, the royal title, and a Latin archbishop or patriarch. The Vatican exulted in the spiritual conquest of Bulgaria, the first object of the schism; and if the Greeks could have preserved the prerogatives of the church, they would gladly have resigned the rights of the monarchy.

The Bulgarians were malicious enough to pray for the long life of Isaac Angelus, the surest pledge of their freedom and prosperity. Yet their chiefs could involve in the same indiscriminate contempt, the family and nation of the emperor. "In all the Greeks," said Asan to his troops, "the same climate, and character, and education, will be productive of the same fruits. Behold my lance," continued the warrior, "and the long streamers that float in the wind. They differ only in colour; they are formed of the same silk and fashioned by the same workman; nor has the stripe, that is stained in purple, any superior price or value above its fellows²²."

Several of these candidates for the purple successively rose and fell under the empire of Isaac: a general who had repelled the fleets of Sicily, was driven to revolt and ruin by the ingratitude of the prince; and his luxurious repose was disturbed by secret conspiracies and popular insurrections. The emperor was saved by accident, or the merit of his servants: he was at length oppressed by an ambitious brother, who, for the hope of a precarious diadem, forgot the obligations of nature, of loyalty, and of friendship²³. While Isaac in the Thracian vallies pursued the idle and solitary pleasures of the chace, his brother, Alexius Angelus, was invested with the purple, by the unanimous suffrage of the camp: the capital and the clergy subscribed to their choice; and the vanity of the new sovereign rejected the name of his fathers, for the lofty and

C H A P.

LX.

Usurpation
and character
of Alexius
Angelus,

A. D.

1195—1203,

April 8.

C H A P. royal appellation of the Comnenian race. On the
 LX. despicable character of Isaac, I have exhausted
 the language of contempt; and can only add,
 that in a reign of eight years, the baser Alexius²⁴
 was supported by the masculine vices of his wife
 Euphrosyne. The first intelligence of his fall was
 conveyed to the late emperor by the hostile aspect
 and pursuit of the guards, no longer his own: he
 fled before them above fifty miles as far as Sta-
 gyra in Macedonia; but the fugitive, without
 an object or a follower, was arrested, brought
 back to Constantinople, deprived of his eyes,
 and confined in a lonesome tower, on a scanty
 allowance of bread and water. At the moment
 of the revolution, his son Alexius, whom he
 educated in the hope of empire, was twelve
 years of age. He was spared by the usurper,
 and reduced to attend his triumph both in peace
 and war; but as the army was encamped on the
 sea-shore, an Italian vessel facilitated the escape
 of the royal youth; and, in the disguise of a
 common sailor, he eluded the search of his ene-
 mies, passed the Hellespont, and found a secure
 refuge in the isle of Sicily. After saluting the
 threshold of the apostles, and imploring the pro-
 tection of pope Innocent the third, Alexius ac-
 cepted the kind invitation of his sister Irene, the
 wife of Philip of Swabia, king of the Romans.
 But in his passage through Italy, he heard that
 the flower of Western chivalry was assembled at
 Venice for the deliverance of the Holy Land;
 and a ray of hope was kindled in his bosom,
 that

that their invincible swords might be employed in his father's restoration. C H A P.

I.X.

About ten or twelve years after the loss of Jerusalem, the nobles of France were again summoned to the holy war by the voice of a third prophet, less extravagant, perhaps, than Peter the hermit, but far below St. Bernard in the merit of an orator and a statesman. An illiterate priest of the neighbourhood of Paris, Fulk of Neuilly²⁵, forsook his parochial duty, to assume the more flattering character of a popular and itinerant missionary. The fame of his sanctity and miracles was spread over the land; he declaimed, with severity and vehemence, against the vices of the age; and his sermons, which he preached in the streets of Paris, converted the robbers, the usurers, the prostitutes, and even the doctors and scholars of the university. No sooner did Innocent the third ascend the chair of St. Peter, than he proclaimed in Italy, Germany, and France, the obligation of a new crusade²⁶. The eloquent pontiff described the ruin of Jerusalem, the triumph of the Pagans, and the shame of Christendom: his liberality proposed the redemption of sins, a plenary indulgence to all who should serve in Palestine, either a year in person, or two years by a substitute²⁷; and among his legates and orators who blew the sacred trumpet, Fulk of Neuilly was the loudest and most successful. The situation of the principal monarchs was averse to the pious summons. The emperor Frederic the second was a child; and his kingdom

The fourth
crusade,
A. D. 1198.

C H A P.
LX.

of Germany was disputed by the rival houses of Brunswick and Swabia, the memorable factions of the Guelphs and Ghibelines. Philip Augustus of France had performed, and could not be persuaded to renew, the perilous vow; but as he was not less ambitious of praise than of power, he cheerfully instituted a perpetual fund for the defence of the Holy Land. Richard of England was fatiated with the glory and misfortunes of his first adventure, and he presumed to deride the exhortations of Fulk of Neuilly, who was not abashed in the presence of kings. "You advise me," said Plantagenet, "to dismiss my three daughters, pride, avarice, and incontinence: I bequeath them to the most deserving; my pride to the knights-templars, my avarice to the monks of Cisteaux, and my incontinence to the prelates." But the preacher was heard and obeyed by the great vassals, the princes of the second order; and Theobald, or Thibaut, count of Champagne, was the foremost in the holy race. The valiant youth, at the age of twenty-two years, was encouraged by the domestic examples of his father, who marched in the second crusade, and of his elder brother, who had ended his days in Palestine with the title of king of Jerusalem: two thousand two hundred knights owed service and homage to his peerage²⁸: the nobles of Champagne excelled in all the exercises of war²⁹; and, by his marriage with the heiress of Navarre, Thibaut could draw a band of hardy Gascons from either

embraced by
the barons of
France.

side of the Pyrenæan mountains. His companion in arms was Louis, count of Blois and Chartres; like himself of regal lineage, for both the princes were nephews, at the same time, of the kings of France and England. In a crowd of prelates and barons, who imitated their zeal, I distinguish the birth and merit of Matthew of Montmorency; the famous Simon of Montfort, the scourge of the Albigeois; and a valiant noble, Jeffrey of Villehardouin³⁰, marshal of Champagne³¹, who has condescended, in the rude idiom of his age and country³², to write or dictate³³ an original narrative of the councils and actions, in which he bore a memorable part. At the same time, Baldwin count of Flanders, who had married the sister of Thibaut, assumed the cross at Bruges, with his brother Henry and the principal knights and citizens of that rich and industrious province³⁴. The vow which the chiefs had pronounced in churches, they ratified in tournaments: the operations of the war were debated in full and frequent assemblies; and it was resolved to seek the deliverance of Palestine in Egypt, a country, since Saladin's death, which was almost ruined by famine and civil war. But the fate of so many royal armies displayed the toils and perils of a land expedition; and, if the Flemings dwelt along the ocean, the French barons were destitute of ships and ignorant of navigation. They embraced the wise resolution of chusing six deputies or representatives, of whom Villehardouin was one, with a discretionary trust

CHAP. to direct the motions, and to pledge the faith, of
 LX. the whole confederacy. The maritime states of Italy were alone possessed of the means of transporting the holy warriors with their arms and horses; and the six deputies proceeded to Venice to solicit, on motives of piety or interest, the aid of that powerful republic.

State of the
 Venetians,
 A. D.
 697—1200.

In the invasion of Italy by Attila, I have mentioned³⁵ the flight of the Venetians from the fallen cities of the continent, and their obscure shelter in the chain of islands that line the extremity of the Adriatic gulf. In the midst of the waters, free, indigent, laborious, and inaccessible, they gradually coalesced into a republic: the first foundations of Venice were laid in the island of Rialto; and the annual election of the twelve tribunes was superseded by the permanent office of a duke or doge. On the verge of the two empires the Venetians exult in the belief of primitive and perpetual independence³⁶. Against the Latins, their antique freedom has been asserted by the sword, and may be justified by the pen. Charlemagne himself resigned all claims of sovereignty to the islands of the Adriatic gulf; his son Pepin was repulsed in the attacks of the *lagunas* or canals, too deep for the cavalry, and too shallow for the vessels; and in every age, under the German Cæsars, the lands of the republic have been clearly distinguished from the kingdom of Italy. But the inhabitants of Venice were considered by themselves, by strangers, and by their sovereigns, as an inalienable portion

of the Greek empire³⁷; in the ninth and tenth centuries, the proofs of their subjection are numerous and unquestionable; and the vain titles, the servile honours, of the Byzantine court, so ambitiously solicited by their dukes, would have degraded the magistrates of a free people. But the bands of this dependence, which was never absolute or rigid, were imperceptibly relaxed by the ambition of Venice and the weakness of Constantinople. Obedience was softened into respect, privilege ripened into prerogative, and the freedom of domestic government was fortified by the independence of foreign dominion. The maritime cities of Istria and Dalmatia bowed to the sovereigns of the Adriatic; and when they armed against the Normans in the cause of Alexius, the emperor applied, not to the duty of his subjects, but to the gratitude and generosity of his faithful allies. The sea was their patrimony³⁸: the western parts of the Mediterranean, from Tuscany to Gibraltar, were indeed abandoned to their rivals of Pisa and Genoa; but the Venetians acquired an early and lucrative share of the commerce of Greece and Egypt. Their riches encreased with the encreasing demand of Europe: their manufactures of silk and glass, perhaps the institution of their bank, are of high antiquity; and they enjoyed the fruits of their industry in the magnificence of public and private life. To assert her flag, to avenge her injuries, to protect the freedom of navigation, the republic could launch and man a fleet of an

E H A P. hundred gallies; and the Greeks, the Saracens,
 LX. and the Normans, were encountered by her
 naval arms. The Franks of Syria were assisted
 by the Venetians in the reduction of the sea-
 coast; but their zeal was neither blind nor disin-
 terested; and in the conquest of Tyre, they
 shared the sovereignty of a city, the first seat of
 the commerce of the world. The policy of
 Venice was marked by the avarice of a trading,
 and the insolence of a maritime, power; yet her
 ambition was prudent; nor did she often forget
 that if armed gallies were the effect and safeguard,
 merchant vessels were the cause and supply, of
 her greatness. In her religion, she avoided the
 schism of the Greeks, without yielding a servile
 obedience to the Roman pontiff; and a free in-
 tercourse with the infidels of every clime appears
 to have allayed betimes the fever of superstition.
 Her primitive government was a loose mixture of
 democracy and monarchy: the doge was elected
 by the votes of the general assembly; as long as
 he was popular and successful, he reigned with
 the pomp and authority of a prince; but in the
 frequent revolutions of the state, he was deposed,
 or banished, or slain, by the justice or injustice
 of the multitude. The twelfth century produced
 the first rudiments of the wise and jealous aris-
 tocracy, which has reduced the doge to a pa-
 geant and the people to a cypher³⁹.

Alliance of
 the French
 and Vene-
 tians,
 A. D. 1201.

When the six ambassadors of the French pil-
 grims arrived at Venice, they were hospitably
 entertained in the palace of St. Mark, by the

reigning duke : his name was Henry Dandolo⁴⁰; and he shone in the last period of human life as one of the most illustrious characters of the times. Under the weight of years, and after the loss of his eyes⁴¹, Dandolo retained a sound understanding and a manly courage; the spirit of an hero, ambitious to signalize his reign by some memorable exploits, and the wisdom of a patriot, anxious to build his fame on the glory and advantage of his country. He praised the bold enthusiasm and liberal confidence of the barons and their deputies; in such a cause, and with such associates, he should aspire, were he a private man, to terminate his life; but he was the servant of the republic, and some delay was requisite to consult, on this arduous business, the judgment of his colleagues. The proposal of the French was first debated by the six *sages* who had been recently appointed to control the administration of the doge: it was next disclosed to the forty members of the council of state; and finally communicated to the legislative assembly of four hundred and fifty representatives, who were annually chosen in the six quarters of the city. In peace and war, the doge was still the chief of the republic; his legal authority was supported by the personal reputation of Dandolo: his arguments of public interest were balanced and approved; and he was authorized to inform the ambassadors of the following conditions of the treaty⁴². It was proposed that the crusaders should assemble at Venice, on the feast of St.

C H A P.

LX.

CHAP. John of the ensuing year : that flat-bottomed
 LX. vessels should be prepared for four thousand five hundred horses, and nine thousand squires, with a number of ships sufficient for the embarkation of four thousand five hundred knights, and twenty thousand foot : that during a term of nine months they should be supplied with provisions, and transported to whatsoever coast the service of God and Christendom should require ; and that the republic should join the armament with a squadron of fifty galleys. It was required that the pilgrims should pay, before their departure, a sum of eighty-five thousand marks of silver ; and that all conquests, by sea and land, should be equally divided between the confederates. The terms were hard ; but the emergency was pressing, and the French barons were not less profuse of money than of blood. A general assembly was convened to ratify the treaty : the stately chapel and place of St. Mark were filled with ten thousand citizens ; and the noble deputies were taught a new lesson of humbling themselves before the majesty of the people. “ Illustrious Venetians,” said the marshal of Champagne, “ we are sent by the greatest and
 “ most powerful barons of France, to implore
 “ the aid of the masters of the sea for the deliver-
 “ ance of Jerusalem. They have enjoined us to
 “ fall prostrate at your feet ; nor will we rise
 “ from the ground, till you have promised to
 “ avenge with us the injuries of Christ.” The eloquence of their words and tears”, their martial

aspect, and suppliant attitude, were applauded by an universal shout; as it were, says Jeffrey, by the sound of an earthquake. The venerable doge ascended the pulpit to urge their request by those motives of honour and virtue, which alone can be offered to a popular assembly: the treaty was transcribed on parchment, attested with oaths and seals, mutually accepted by the weeping and joyful representatives of France and Venice; and dispatched to Rome for the approbation of pope Innocent the third. Two thousand marks were borrowed of the merchants for the first expences of the armament. Of the six deputies, two repassed the Alps to announce their success, while their four companions made a fruitless trial of the zeal and emulation of the republics of Genoa and Pisa.

The execution of the treaty was still opposed by unforeseen difficulties and delays. The marshal, on his return to Troyes, was embraced and approved by Thibaut count of Champagne, who had been unanimously chosen general of the confederates. But the health of that valiant youth already declined, and soon became hopeless; and he deplored the untimely fate, which condemned him to expire, not in a field of battle, but on a bed of sickness. To his brave and numerous vassals, the dying prince distributed his treasures: they swore in his presence to accomplish his vow and their own; but some there were, says the marshal, who accepted his gifts and forfeited their word. The more resolute champions of the

C H A P.
LX.

Assembly and
departure of
the crusade
from Venice,
A. D. 1202,
October 8.

C H A P.

LX.

cross held a parliament at Soissons for the election of a new general; but such was the incapacity, or jealousy, or reluctance, of the princes of France, that none could be found both able and willing to assume the conduct of the enterprize. They acquiesced in the choice of a stranger, of Boniface marquis of Montferrat, descended of a race of heroes, and himself of conspicuous fame in the wars and negociations of the times⁴⁴; nor could the piety or ambition of the Italian chief decline this honourable invitation. After visiting the French court, where he was received as a friend and kinsman, the marquis, in the church of Soissons, was invested with the cross of a pilgrim and the staff of a general; and immediately repassed the Alps, to prepare for the distant expedition of the East. About the festival of the Pentecost he displayed his banner, and marched towards Venice at the head of the Italians: he was preceded or followed by the counts of Flanders and Blois, and the most respectable barons of France; and their numbers were swelled by the pilgrims of Germany⁴⁵, whose object and motives were similar to their own. The Venetians had fulfilled, and even surpassed, their engagements: stables were constructed for the horses, and barracks for the troops; the magazines were abundantly replenished with forage and provisions; and the fleet of transports, ships, and gallies, was ready to hoist sail, as soon as the republic had received the price of the freight and armament. But that price far exceeded the wealth of the crusaders

who were assembled at Venice. The Flemings, whose obedience to their count was voluntary and precarious, had embarked in their vessels for the long navigation of the ocean and Mediterranean; and many of the French and Italians had preferred a cheaper and more convenient passage from Marseilles and Apulia to the Holy Land. Each pilgrim might complain, that after he had furnished his own contribution he was made responsible for the deficiency of his absent brethren: the gold and silver plate of the chiefs, which they freely delivered to the treasury of St. Mark, was a generous but inadequate sacrifice; and after all their efforts, thirty-four thousand marks were still wanting to complete the stipulated sum. The obstacle was removed by the policy and patriotism of the doge, who proposed to the barons, that if they would join their arms in reducing some revolted cities of Dalmatia, he would expose his person in the holy war, and obtain from the republic a long indulgence, till some wealthy conquest should afford the means of satisfying the debt. After much scruple and hesitation they chose rather to accept the offer than to relinquish the enterprise; and the first hostilities of the fleet and army were directed against Zara⁴⁶, a strong city of the Sclavonian coast, which had renounced its allegiance to Venice, and implored the protection of the king of Hungary⁴⁷. The crusaders burst the chain or boom of the harbour; landed their horses, troops, and military engines; and compelled the

CHAP.
LX.

Siege of
Zara,
Nov. 10.

CHAP. inhabitants, after a defence of five days, to sur-
 LX. render at discretion; their lives were spared, but
 the revolt was punished by the pillage of their
 houses and the demolition of their walls. The
 season was far advanced; the French and Vene-
 tians resolved to pass the winter in a secure har-
 bour and plentiful country; but their repose was
 disturbed by national and tumultuous quarrels of
 the soldiers and mariners. The conquest of Zara
 had scattered the seeds of discord and scandal:
 the arms of the allies had been stained in their
 outset with the blood, not of infidels, but of
 Christians: the king of Hungary and his new
 subjects were themselves enlisted under the banner
 of the cross; and the scruples of the devout,
 were magnified by the fear or lassitude of the
 reluctant, pilgrims. The pope had excommuni-
 cated the false crusaders who had pillaged and
 massacred their brethren⁴⁸, and only the marquis
 Boniface and Simon of Montfort escaped these
 spiritual thunders; the one by his absence from
 the siege, the other by his final departure from
 the camp. Innocent might absolve the simple
 and submissive penitents of France; but he was
 provoked by the stubborn reason of the Vene-
 tians, who refused to confess their guilt, to
 accept their pardon, or to allow, in their tem-
 poral concerns, the interposition of a priest.

Alliance of the
 crusaders with
 the Greek
 prince, the
 young Alexius.

The assembly of such formidable powers by sea
 and land, had revived the hopes of young⁴⁹
 Alexius; and, both at Venice and Zara, he solicited
 the arms of the crusaders, for his own restoration

and his father's ⁵⁰ deliverance. The royal youth was recommended by Philip king of Germany: his prayers and presence excited the compassion of the camp; and his cause was embraced and pleaded by the marquis of Montferrat and the doge of Venice. A double alliance, and the dignity of Cæsar, had connected with the Imperial family the two elder brothers of Boniface ⁵¹: he expected to derive a kingdom from the important service; and the more generous ambition of Dandolo was eager to secure the inestimable benefits of trade and dominion that might accrue to his country ⁵². Their influence procured a favourable audience for the ambassadors of Alexius; and if the magnitude of his offers excited some suspicion, the motives and rewards which he displayed might justify the delay and diversion of those forces which had been consecrated to the deliverance of Jerusalem. He promised, in his own and his father's name, that as soon as they should be seated on the throne of Constantinople, they would terminate the long schism of the Greeks, and submit themselves and their people to the lawful supremacy of the Roman church. He engaged to recompense the labours and merits of the crusaders, by the immediate payment of two hundred thousand marks of silver; to accompany them in person to Egypt; or, if it should be judged more advantageous, to maintain, during a year, ten thousand men, and, during his life, five hundred knights, for the service of the Holy Land. These tempting conditions were accepted

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by the republic of Venice; and the eloquence of the doge and marquis persuaded the counts of Flanders, Blois, and St. Pol, with eight barons of France, to join in the glorious enterprize. A treaty of offensive and defensive alliance was confirmed by their oaths and seals; and each individual, according to his situation and character, was swayed by the hope of public or private advantage; by the honour of restoring an exiled monarch; or by the sincere and probable opinion, that their efforts in Palestine would be fruitless and unavailing, and that the acquisition of Constantinople must precede and prepare the recovery of Jerusalem. But they were the chiefs or equals of a valiant band of freemen and volunteers, who thought and acted for themselves: the soldiers and clergy were divided; and, if a large majority subscribed to the alliance, the numbers and arguments of the dissidents were strong and respectable³. The boldest hearts were appalled by the report of the naval power and impregnable strength of Constantinople; and their apprehensions were disguised to the world, and perhaps to themselves, by the more decent objections of religion and duty. They alleged the sanctity of a vow, which had drawn them from their families and homes to the rescue of the holy sepulchre; nor should the dark and crooked counsels of human policy divert them from a pursuit, the event of which was in the hands of the Almighty. Their first offence, the attack of Zara had been severely punished by the reproach of their conscience and the censures

of the pope ; nor would they again imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-christians. The apostle of Rome had pronounced; nor would they usurp the right of avenging with the sword the schism of the Greeks and the doubtful usurpation of the Byzantine monarch. On these principles or pretences, many pilgrims, the most distinguished for their valour and piety, withdrew from the camp; and their retreat was less pernicious than the open or secret opposition of a discontented party, that laboured, on every occasion, to separate the army and disappoint the enterprize.

Notwithstanding this defection, the departure of the fleet and army was rigorously pressed by the Venetians; whose zeal for the service of the royal youth concealed a just resentment to his nation and family. They were mortified by the recent preference which had been given to Pisa the rival of their trade; they had a long arrear of debt and injury to liquidate with the Byzantine court; and Dandolo might not discourage the popular tale, that he had been deprived of his eyes by the emperor Manuel, who perfidiously violated the sanctity of an ambassador. A similar armament, for ages, had not rode the Adriatic: it was composed of one hundred and twenty flat-bottomed vessels or *palanders* for the horses; two hundred and forty transports filled with men and arms; seventy storeships laden with provisions; and fifty stout gallies, well prepared for the encounter of an enemy⁺. While the wind was favourable, the sky serene, and the water smooth, every eye was

Voyage from
Zara to Constantinople,
A. D. 1203,
April 7 —
June 24.

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fixed with wonder and delight on the scene of military and naval pomp which overspread the sea. The shields of the knights and squires, at once an ornament and a defence, were arranged on either side of the ships; the banners of the nations and families were displayed from the stern; our modern artillery was supplied by three hundred engines for casting stones and darts: the fatigues of the way were cheered with the sound of music; and the spirits of the adventurers were raised by the mutual assurance, that forty thousand christian heroes were equal to the conquest of the world⁵⁵. In the navigation⁵⁶ from Venice and Zara, the fleet was successfully steered by the skill and experience of the Venetian pilots: at Durazzo, the confederates first landed on the territories of the Greek empire: the isle of Corfu afforded a station and repose; they doubled without accident the perilous cape of Malea, the southern point of Peloponnesus or the Morea; made a descent in the islands of Negropont and Andros; and cast anchor at Abydus on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont. These preludes of conquest were easy and bloodless; the Greeks of the provinces, without patriotism or courage, were crushed by an irresistible force; the presence of the lawful heir might justify their obedience; and it was rewarded by the modesty and discipline of the Latins. As they penetrated through the Hellespont, the magnitude of their navy was compressed in a narrow channel; and the face of the waters was darkened with innumerable sails. They again expanded

expanded in the bafon of the Propontis, and traversed that placid fea, till they approached the European fhore, at the abbey of St. Stephen, three leagues to the weft of Conftantinople. The prudent doge diffuaded them from difperſing themſelves in a populous and hoſtile land; and, as their ſtock of proviſions was reduced, it was reſolved, in the ſeaſon of harveſt, to replenish their ſtoreſhips in the fertile iſlands of the Propontis. With this reſolution, they directed their courſe; but a ſtrong gale, and their own impatience, drove them to the eaſtward; and ſo near did they run to the ſhore and the city, that ſome vollies of ſtones and darts were exchanged between the ſhips and the rampart. As they paſſed along, they gazed with admiration on the capital of the Eaſt, or, as it ſhould ſeem, of the earth; riſing from her ſeven hills, and towering over the continents of Europe and Aſia. The ſwelling domes and lofty ſpires of five hundred palaces and churches, were gilded by the ſun and reflected in the waters; the walls were crowded with foldiers and ſpectators, whoſe numbers they beheld, of whoſe temper they were ignorant; and each heart was chilled by the reflection, that, ſince the beginning of the world, ſuch an enterpriſe had never been undertaken by ſuch an handful of warriors. But the momentary apprehenſion was diſpelled by hope and valour; and every man, ſays the marſhal of Champagne, glanced his eyes on the ſword or lance which he muſt ſpeedily uſe in the glorious conflict⁵⁷. The

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Latins cast anchor before Chalcedon; the mariners only were left in the vessels; the soldiers, horses, and arms, were safely landed; and, in the luxury of an Imperial palace, the barons tasted the first fruits of their success. On the third day, the fleet and army moved towards Scutary, the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople; a detachment of five hundred Greek horse was surprised and defeated by fourscore French knights; and in a halt of nine days, the camp was plentifully supplied with forage and provisions.

Fruitless negotiation of the emperor.

In relating the invasion of a great empire, it may seem strange that I have not described the obstacles which should have checked the progress of the strangers. The Greeks, in truth, were an unwarlike people; but they were rich, industrious, and subject to the will of a single man: had that man been capable of fear, when his enemies were at a distance, or of courage, when they approached his person. The first rumour of his nephew's alliance with the French and Venetians was despised by the usurper Alexius; his flatterers persuaded him, that in this contempt he was bold and sincere; and each evening in the close of the banquet, he thrice discomfited the Barbarians of the West. These Barbarians had been justly terrified by the report of his naval power; and the sixteen hundred fishingboats of Constantinople¹ could have manned a fleet, to sink them in the Adriatic, or stop their entrance in the mouth of the Hellespont. But all force may be annihilated by the negligence of the prince and the venality of his ministers.

The great duke, or admiral, made a scandalous, almost a public, auction of the sails, the masts, and the rigging: the royal forests were reserved for the more important purpose of the chace; and the trees, says Nicetas, were guarded by the eunuchs, like the groves of religious worship". From his dream of pride, Alexius was awakened by the siege of Zara and the rapid advances of the Latins; as soon as he saw the danger was real, he thought it inevitable; and his vain presumption was lost in abject despondency and despair. He suffered these contemptible Barbarians to pitch their camp in the sight of the palace; and his apprehensions were thinly disguised by the pomp and menace of a suppliant embassy. The sovereign of the Romans was astonished (his ambassadors were instructed to say) at the hostile appearance of the strangers. If these pilgrims were sincere in their vow for the deliverance of Jerusalem, his voice must applaud, and his treasures should assist, their pious design; but should they dare to invade the sanctuary of empire, their numbers, were they ten times more considerable, should not protect them from his just resentment. The answer of the doge and barons was simple and magnanimous. "In the cause of honour and justice," they said, "we despise the usurper of Greece, his threats, and his offers. *Our* friendship and *his* allegiance are due to the lawful heir, to the young prince who is seated among us, and to his father, the emperor Isaac, who has been deprived of his sceptre, his freedom, and his eyes, by the crime

CHAP. "of an ungrateful brother. Let that brother
 LX. "confess his guilt, and implore forgiveness, and
 "we ourselves will intercede, that he may be
 "permitted to live in affluence and security. But
 "let him not insult us by a second message: our
 "reply will be made in arms, in the palace of
 "Constantinople."

Passage of
 the Bospho-
 rus,
 July 6.

On the tenth day of their encampment at Scutari, the crusaders prepared themselves, as soldiers and as catholics, for the passage of the Bosphorus. Perilous indeed was the adventure; the stream was broad and rapid; in a calm the current of the Euxine might drive down the liquid and unextinguishable fires of the Greeks; and the opposite shores of Europe were defended by seventy thousand horse and foot in formidable array. On this memorable day, which happened to be bright and pleasant, the Latins were distributed in six battles or divisions; the first, or vanguard, was led by the count of Flanders, one of the most powerful of the Christian princes in the skill and number of his cross-bows. The four successive battles of the French were commanded by his brother Henry, the counts of St. Pol and Blois, and Matthew of Montmorency, the last of whom was honoured by the voluntary service of the marshal and nobles of Champagne. The sixth division, the rear-guard and reserve of the army, was conducted by the marquis of Montferrat, at the head of the Germans and Lombards. The chargers, saddled, with their long caparisons dragging on the ground, were embarked in the

flat *palanders* ⁶⁰; and the knights stood by the side of their horses, in complete armour, their helmets laced, and their lances in their hands. Their numerous train of *serjeants* ⁶¹ and archers occupied the transports; and each transport was towed by the strength and swiftness of a galley. The six divisions traversed the Bosphorus, without encountering an enemy or an obstacle; to land the foremost was the wish, to conquer or die was the resolution, of every division and of every soldier. Jealous of the pre-eminence of danger, the knights in their heavy armour leaped into the sea, when it rose as high as their girdle; the serjeants and archers were animated by their valour; and the squires, letting down the draw-bridges of the palanders, led the horses to the shore. Before the squadrons could mount, and form, and couch their lances, the seventy thousand Greeks had vanished from their sight; the timid Alexius gave the example to his troops; and it was only by the plunder of his rich pavilions that the Latins were informed that they had fought against an emperor. In the first consternation of the flying enemy, they resolved by a double attack to open the entrance of the harbour. The tower of Galata ⁶², in the suburb of Pera, was attacked and stormed by the French, while the Venetians assumed the more difficult task of forcing the boom or chain that was stretched from that tower to the Byzantine shore. After some fruitless attempts, their intrepid perseverance prevailed: twenty ships of war, the relics of the Grecian navy, were

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either sunk or taken: the enormous and massy links of iron were cut asunder by the shears, or broken by the weight, of the gallies⁶³; and the Venetian fleet, safe and triumphant, rode at anchor in the port of Constantinople. By these daring achievements, a remnant of twenty thousand Latins solicited the licence of besieging a capital which contained above four hundred thousand inhabitants⁶⁴, able, though not willing, to bear arms in the defence of their country. Such an account would indeed suppose a population of near two millions; but whatever abatement may be required in the numbers of the Greeks, the *belief* of those numbers will equally exalt the fearless spirit of their assailants.

First siege
and conquest
of Constanti-
nople by the
Latins,
July 7—18.

In the choice of the attack, the French and Venetians were divided by their habits of life and warfare. The former affirmed with truth, that Constantinople was most accessible on the side of the sea and the harbour. The latter might assert with honour, that they had long enough trusted their lives and fortunes to a frail bark and a precarious element, and loudly demanded a trial of knighthood, a firm ground, and a close onset, either on foot or horseback. After a prudent compromise, of employing the two nations by sea and land, in the service best suited to their character, the fleet covering the army, they both proceeded from the entrance to the extremity of the harbour: the stone bridge of the river was hastily repaired; and the six battalions of the French formed their encampment

against the front of the capital, the basis of the triangle which runs about four miles from the port to the Propontis⁶⁵. On the edge of a broad ditch, at the foot of a lofty rampart, they had leisure to contemplate the difficulties of their enterprise. The gates to the right and left of their narrow camp poured forth frequent sallies of cavalry and light-infantry, which cut off their stragglers, swept the country of provisions, sounded the alarm five or six times in the course of each day, and compelled them to plant a palisade, and sink an entrenchment, for their immediate safety. In the supplies and convoys the Venetians had been too sparing, or the Franks too voracious: the usual complaints of hunger and scarcity were heard, and perhaps felt: their stock of flour would be exhausted in three weeks; and their disgust of salt meat tempted them to taste the flesh of their horses. The trembling usurper was supported by Theodore Lascaris, his son-in-law, a valiant youth, who aspired to save and to rule his country; the Greeks, regardless of that country, were awakened to the defence of their religion; but their firmest hope was in the strength and spirit of the Varangian guards, of the Danes and English, as they are named in the writers of the times⁶⁶. After ten days incessant labour, the ground was levelled, the ditch filled, the approaches of the besiegers were regularly made, and two hundred and fifty engines of assault exercised their various powers to clear the rampart, to batter the walls, and to sap the foundations.

CHAP. LX. On the first appearance of a breach, the scaling-ladders were applied: the numbers that defended the vantage ground repulsed and oppressed the adventurous Latins; but they admired the resolution of fifteen knights and serjeants, who had gained the ascent, and maintained their perilous station till they were precipitated or made prisoners by the Imperial guards. On the side of the harbour the naval attack was more successfully conducted by the Venetians; and that industrious people employed every resource that was known and practised before the invention of gunpowder. A double line, three bow-shots in front, was formed by the gallies and ships; and the swift motion of the former was supported by the weight and loftiness of the latter, whose decks, and poops, and turrets, were the platforms of military engines, that discharged their shot over the heads of the first line. The soldiers, who leaped from the gallies on shore, immediately planted and ascended their scaling-ladders, while the large ships, advancing more slowly into the intervals, and lowering a draw-bridge, opened a way through the air from their masts to the rampart. In the midst of the conflict, the doge, a venerable and conspicuous form, stood aloft in complete armour on the prow of his galley. The great standard of St. Mark was displayed before him; his threats, promises, and exhortations, urged the diligence of the rowers; his vessel was the first that struck; and Dandolo was the first warrior on the shore. The nations

admired the magnanimity of the blind old man, without reflecting that his age and infirmities diminished the price of life, and enhanced the value of immortal glory. On a sudden, by an invisible hand (for the standard-bearer was probably slain), the banner of the republic was fixed on the rampart: twenty-five towers were rapidly occupied; and, by the cruel expedient of fire, the Greeks were driven from the adjacent quarter. The doge had dispatched the intelligence of his success, when he was checked by the danger of his confederates. Nobly declaring that he would rather die with the pilgrims than gain a victory by their destruction, Dandolo relinquished his advantage, recalled his troops, and hastened to the scene of action. He found the six weary diminutive *battles* of the French encompassed by sixty squadrons of the Greek cavalry, the least of which was more numerous than the largest of their divisions. Shame and despair had provoked Alexius to the last effort of a general sally; but he was awed by the firm order and manly aspect of the Latins; and, after skirmishing at a distance, withdrew his troops in the close of the evening. The silence or tumult of the night exasperated his fears; and the timid usurper, collecting a treasure of ten thousand pounds of gold, basely deserted his wife, his people, and his fortune; threw himself into a bark, stole through the Bosphorus, and landed in shameful safety in an obscure harbour of Thrace. As soon as they were apprised of his flight, the Greek nobles

CHAP. fought pardon and peace in the dungeon where
 LX. the blind Isaac expected each hour the visit of
 the executioner. Again saved and exalted by the
 vicissitudes of fortune, the captive in his Imperial
 robes was replaced on the throne, and surrounded
 with prostrate slaves, whose real terror and affected
 joy he was incapable of discerning. At the dawn of
 day, hostilities were suspended; and the Latin chiefs
 were surprised by a message from the lawful and
 reigning emperor, who was impatient to embrace his
 son and to reward his generous deliverers⁶⁷.

Restoration
 of the emper-
 or Isaac An-
 gelus, and his
 son Alexius,
 July 19.

But these generous deliverers were unwilling to
 release their hostage, till they had obtained from
 his father the payment, or at least the promise,
 of their recompence. They chose four ambassa-
 dors, Matthew of Montmorency, our historian
 the marshal of Champagne, and two Venetians,
 to congratulate the emperor. The gates were
 thrown open on their approach, the streets on
 both sides were lined with the battle-axes of the
 Danish and English guard: the presence-chamber
 glittered with gold and jewels, the false substi-
 tutes of virtue and power; by the side of the
 blind Isaac, his wife was seated, the sister of the
 king of Hungary; and by her appearance, the
 noble matrons of Greece were drawn from their
 domestic retirement, and mingled with the circle
 of senators and soldiers. The Latins, by the
 mouth of the marshal, spoke like men, con-
 scious of their merits, but who respected the
 work of their own hands; and the emperor

clearly understood, that his son's engagements with Venice and the pilgrims must be ratified without hesitation or delay. Withdrawing into a private chamber with the empress, a chamberlain, an interpreter, and the four ambassadors, the father of young Alexius enquired with some anxiety into the nature of his stipulations. The submission of the Eastern empire to the pope, the succour of the Holy Land, and a present contribution of two hundred thousand marks of silver—"These conditions are weighty," was his prudent reply; "they are hard to accept, and difficult to perform. But no conditions can exceed the measure of your services and deserts." After this satisfactory assurance, the barons mounted on horseback, and introduced the heir of Constantinople to the city and palace: his youth and marvellous adventures engaged every heart in his favour, and Alexius was solemnly crowned with his father in the dome of St. Sophia. In the first days of his reign, the people, already blessed with the restoration of plenty and peace, was delighted by the joyful catastrophe of the tragedy; and the discontent of the nobles, their regret, and their fears, were covered by the polished surface of pleasure and loyalty. The mixture of two discordant nations in the same capital, might have been pregnant with mischief and danger; and the suburb of Galata, or Pera, was assigned for the quarters of the French and Venetians. But the liberty of trade and familiar intercourse was allowed

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between the friendly nations ; and each day the pilgrims were tempted by devotion or curiosity to visit the churches and palaces of Constantinople. Their rude minds , insensible perhaps of the finer arts , were astonished by the magnificent scenery : and the poverty of their native towns enhanced the populousness and riches of the first metropolis of Christendom⁶⁸. Descending from his state , young Alexius was prompted by interest and gratitude to repeat his frequent and familiar visits to his Latin allies ; and in the freedom of the table , the gay petulance of the French sometimes forgot the emperor of the East⁶⁹. In their more serious conferences , it was agreed , that the re-union of the two churches must be the result of patience and time ; but avarice was less tractable than zeal ; and a large sum was instantly disbursed to appease the wants , and silence the importunity , of the crusaders⁷⁰. Alexius was alarmed by the approaching hour of their departure : their absence might have relieved him from the engagement which he was yet incapable of performing ; but his friends would have left him , naked and alone , to the caprice and prejudice of a perfidious nation. He wished to bribe their stay , the delay of a year , by undertaking to defray their expence , and to satisfy , in their name , the freight of the Venetian vessels. The offer was agitated in the council of the barons ; and , after a repetition of their debates and scruples , a majority of votes again acquiesced in the advice of the doge and the prayer of the

young emperor. At the price of sixteen hundred pounds of gold, he prevailed on the marquis of Montferrat to lead him with an army round the provinces of Europe; to establish his authority, and pursue his uncle, while Constantinople was awed by the presence of Baldwin and his confederates of France and Flanders. The expedition was successful; the blind emperor exulted in the success of his arms, and listened to the predictions of his flatterers, that the same Providence which had raised him from the dungeon to the throne, would heal his gout, restore his sight, and watch over the long prosperity of his reign. Yet the mind of the suspicious old man was tormented by the rising glories of his son: nor could his pride conceal from his envy, that, while his own name was pronounced in faint and reluctant acclamations, the royal youth was the theme of spontaneous and universal praise⁷¹.

By the recent invasion, the Greeks were awakened from a dream of nine centuries; from the vain presumption that the capital of the Roman empire was impregnable to foreign arms. The strangers of the West had violated the city, and bestowed the sceptre, of Constantine: their Imperial clients soon became as unpopular as themselves: the well-known vices of Isaac were rendered still more contemptible by his infirmities; and the young Alexius was hated as an apostate who had renounced the manners and religion of his country. His secret covenant with the Latins was divulged or suspected; the people and

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Quarrel of
the Greeks
and Latins,

C H A P. especially the clergy, were devoutly attached to
 LX. their faith and superstition; and every convent,
 and every shop, refounded with the danger of
 the church and the tyranny of the pope⁷². An
 empty treasury could ill supply the demands of
 regal luxury and foreign extortion: the Greeks
 refused to avert, by a general tax, the impend-
 ing evils of servitude and pillage; the oppres-
 sion of the rich excited a more dangerous and
 personal resentment; and if the emperor melted
 the plate, and despoiled the images, of the sanc-
 tuary, he seemed to justify the complaints of
 heresy and sacrilege. During the absence of
 marquis Boniface and his Imperial pupil, Con-
 stantinople was visited with a calamity which
 might be justly imputed to the zeal and indis-
 cretion of the Flemish pilgrims⁷³. In one of their
 visits to the city, they were scandalized by the
 aspect of a mosch or synagogue, in which one
 God was worshipped, without a partner or a
 son. Their effectual mode of controversy was
 to attack the infidels with the sword, and their
 habitation with fire: but the infidels, and some
 Christian neighbours, presumed to defend their
 lives and properties; and the flames which bigotry
 had kindled consumed the most orthodox and
 innocent structures. During eight days and nights,
 the conflagration spread above a league in front,
 from the harbour to the Propontis, over the
 thickest and most populous regions of the city.
 It is not easy to count the stately churches and
 palaces that were reduced to a smoking ruin, to

value the merchandise that perished in the trading streets, or to number the families that were involved in the common destruction. By this outrage, which the doge and the barons in vain affected to disclaim, the name of the Latins became still more unpopular; and the colony of that nation, above fifteen thousand persons, consulted their safety in a hasty retreat from the city to the protection of their standard in the suburb of Pera. The emperor returned in triumph; but the firmest and most dextrous policy would have been insufficient to steer him through the tempest, which overwhelmed the person and government of that unhappy youth. His own inclination, and his father's advice, attached him to his benefactors; but Alexius hesitated between gratitude and patriotism, between the fear of his subjects and of his allies⁷⁴. By his feeble and fluctuating conduct he lost the esteem and confidence of both; and, while he invited the marquis of Montferrat to occupy the palace, he suffered the nobles to conspire, and the people to arm, for the deliverance of their country. Regardless of his painful situation, the Latin chiefs repeated their demands, resented his delays, suspected his intentions, and exacted a decisive answer of peace or war. The haughty summons was delivered by three French knights and three Venetian deputies, who girded their swords, mounted their horses, pierced through the angry multitude, and entered with a fearless countenance the palace and presence of

CHAP. the Greek emperor. In a peremptory tone,
 LX. they recapitulated their services and his engagements; and boldly declared, that unless their just claims were fully and immediately satisfied, they should no longer hold him either as a sovereign or a friend. After this defiance, the first that had ever wounded an Imperial ear, they departed without betraying any symptoms of fear; but their escape from a servile palace and a furious city astonished the ambassadors themselves; and their return to the camp was the signal of mutual hostility.

The war renewed,
 A. D. 1204.

Among the Greeks, all authority and wisdom were overborne by the impetuous multitude, who mistook their rage for valour, their numbers for strength, and their fanaticism for the support and inspiration of Heaven. In the eyes of both nations Alexius was false and contemptible: the base and spurious race of the Angeli was rejected with clamorous disdain; and the people of Constantinople encompassed the senate, to demand at their hands a more worthy emperor. To every senator, conspicuous by his birth or dignity, they successively presented the purple: by each senator the deadly garment was repulsed: the contest lasted three days; and we may learn from the historian Nicetas, one of the members of the assembly, that fear and weakness were the guardians of their loyalty. A phantom, who vanished in oblivion, was forcibly proclaimed by the crowd⁷⁵; but the author of the tumult, and the leader of the war, was a prince of the house of Ducas; and his common
 appellation

appellation of Alexius must be discriminated by the epithet of Mourzoufle⁷⁶, which in the vulgar idiom expressed the close junction of his black and shaggy eye-brows. At once a patriot and a courtier, the perfidious Mourzoufle, who was not destitute of cunning and courage, opposed the Latins both in speech and action, inflamed the passions and prejudices of the Greeks, and insinuated himself into the favour and confidence of Alexius, who trusted him with the office of great chamberlain, and tinged his buskins with the colours of royalty. At the dead of night he rushed into the bed-chamber with an affrighted aspect, exclaiming, that the palace was attacked by the people and betrayed by the guards. Starting from his couch, the unsuspecting prince threw himself into the arms of his enemy, who had contrived his escape by a private staircase. But that staircase terminated in a prison; Alexius was seized, stripped, and loaded with chains; and, after tasting some days the bitterness of death, he was poisoned, or strangled, or beaten with clubs, at the command, and in the presence, of the tyrant. The emperor Isaac Angelus soon followed his son to the grave, and Mourzoufle, perhaps, might spare the superfluous crime of hastening the extinction of impotence and blindness.

The death of the emperors, and the usurpation of Mourzoufle, had changed the nature of the quarrel. It was no longer the disagreement of allies who overvalued their services, or neglected their

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Alexius and his father deposed by Mourzoufle, February 8.

Second siege, January — April,

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obligations: the French and Venetians forgot their complaints against Alexius, dropt a tear on the untimely fate of their companion, and swore revenge against the perfidious nation who had crowned his assassin. Yet the prudent doge was still inclined to negotiate; he asked as a debt, a subsidy, or a fine, fifty thousand pounds of gold, about two millions sterling; nor would the conference have been abruptly broken, if the zeal, or policy, of Mourzoufle had not refused to sacrifice the Greek church to the safety of the state⁷⁷. Amidst the invectives of his foreign and domestic enemies, we may discern, that he was not unworthy of the character which he had assumed, of the public champion: the second siege of Constantinople was far more laborious than the first; the treasury was replenished, and discipline was restored, by a severe inquisition into the abuses of the former reign; and Mourzoufle, an iron mace in his hand, visiting the posts, and affecting the port and aspect of a warrior, was an object of terror, to his soldiers, at least, and to his kinsmen. Before and after the death of Alexius, the Greeks made two vigorous and well-conducted attempts to burn the navy in the harbour; but the skill and courage of the Venetians repulsed the fire-ships; and the vagrant flames wasted themselves without injury in the sea⁷⁸. In a nocturnal sally, the Greek emperor was vanquished by Henry, brother of the count of Flanders: the advantages of number and surprise aggravated the shame of his defeat; his,

buckler was found on the field of battle; and the Imperial standard", a divine image of the Virgin, was presented, as a trophy and a relic, to the Cistercian monks, the disciples of St. Bernard. Near three months, without excepting the holy season of Lent, were consumed in skirmishes and preparations, before the Latins were ready or resolved for a general assault. The land-fortifications had been found impregnable; and the Venetian pilots represented, that, on the shore of the Propontis, the anchorage was unsafe, and the ships must be driven by the current far away to the streights of the Hellespont; a prospect not unpleasing to the reluctant pilgrims, who sought every opportunity of breaking the army. From the harbour, therefore, the assault was determined by the assailants, and expected by the besieged; and the emperor had placed his scarlet pavilions on a neighbouring height, to direct and animate the efforts of his troops. A fearless spectator, whose mind could entertain the ideas of pomp and pleasure, might have admired the long array of two embattled armies, which extended above half a league, the one on the ships and galleys, the other on the walls and towers raised above the ordinary level by several stages of wooden turrets. Their first fury was spent in the discharge of darts, stones, and fire, from the engines; but the water was deep; the French were bold; the Venetians were skilful; they approached the walls; and a desperate conflict of swords, spears, and battle-axes, was fought on the trembling

CHAP. LX. bridges that grappled the floating, to the stable, batteries. In more than an hundred places, the assault was urged, and the defence was sustained; till the superiority of ground and numbers finally prevailed, and the Latin trumpets founded a retreat. On the ensuing day, the attack was renewed with equal vigour and a similar event; and, in the night, the doge and the barons held a council, apprehensive only for the public danger: not a voice pronounced the words of escape or treaty; and each warrior, according to his temper, embraced the hope of victory or the assurance of a glorious death⁸⁰. By the experience of the former siege, the Greeks were instructed, but the Latins were animated; and the knowledge, that Constantinople *might* be taken, was of more avail than the local precautions which that knowledge had inspired for its defence. In the third assault, two ships were linked together to double their strength; a strong north wind drove them on the shore; the bishops of Troyes and Soissons led the van; and the auspicious names of the *pilgrim* and the *paradise* resounded along the line⁸¹. The episcopal banners were displayed on the walls; an hundred marks of silver had been promised to the first adventurers; and if their reward was intercepted by death, their names have been immortalised by fame. Four towers were scaled; three gates were burst open; and the French knights, who might tremble on the waves, felt themselves invincible on horseback on the solid ground. Shall I relate that the thousands who

guarded the emperor's person fled on the approach and before the lance of a single warrior? Their ignominious flight is attested by their countryman Nicetas ; an army of phantoms marched with the French hero, and he was magnified to a giant in the eyes of the Greeks⁸². While the fugitives deserted their posts and cast away their arms, the Latins entered the city under the banners of their leaders; the streets and gates opened for their passage, and either design or accident kindled a third conflagration, which consumed in a few hours the measure of three of the largest cities of France⁸³. In the close of evening, the barons checked their troops and fortified their stations; they were awed by the extent and populousness of the capital, which might yet require the labour of a month, if the churches and palaces were conscious of their internal strength. But in the morning, a suppliant procession, with crosses and images, announced the submission of the Greeks, and deprecated the wrath of the conquerors: the usurper escaped through the golden gate; the palaces of Blachernæ and Boucoleon were occupied by the count of Flanders and the marquis of Montferrat; and the empire which still bore the name of Constantine, and the title of Roman was subverted by the arms of the Latin pilgrims⁸⁴.

Constantinople had been taken by storm; and no restraints, except those of religion and humanity, were imposed on the conquerors by the laws of war. Boniface marquis of Montferrat still acted

Pillage of
Constantino-
ple.

CHAP. as their general; and the Greeks, who revered
 LX. his name as that of their future sovereign, were
 heard to exclaim in a lamentable tone, "Holy
 "marquis-king, have mercy upon us!" His
 prudence or compassion opened the gates of the
 city to the fugitives; and he exhorted the sol-
 diers of the cross to spare the lives of their fel-
 low-Christians. The streams of blood that flow
 down the pages of Nicetas, may be reduced to
 the slaughter of two thousand of his unresisting
 countrymen³⁵; and the greater part was massa-
 cred, not by the strangers, but by the Latins,
 who had been driven from the city, and who
 exercised the revenge of a triumphant faction.
 Yet of these exiles, some were less mindful of
 injuries than of benefits; and Nicetas himself was
 indebted for his safety to the generosity of a Ve-
 netian merchant. Pope Innocent the third accuses
 the pilgrims of respecting, in their lust, neither
 age nor sex, nor religious profession; and bit-
 terly laments that the deeds of darkness, fornica-
 tion, adultery, and incest, were perpetrated in
 open day; and that noble matrons and holy nuns
 were polluted by the grooms and peasants of the
 Catholic camp³⁶. It is indeed probable that the
 licence of victory prompted and covered a mul-
 titude of sins; but it is certain, that the capital
 of the East contained a stock of venal or willing
 beauty, sufficient to satiate the desires of twenty
 thousand pilgrims; and female prisoners were no
 longer subject to the right or abuse of domestic
 slavery. The marquis of Montferrat was the
 patron of discipline and decency; the count of

Flanders was the mirrour of chastity: they had forbidden, under pain of death, the rape of married women, or virgins, or nuns; and the proclamation was sometimes invoked by the vanquished⁸⁷ and respected by the victors. Their cruelty and lust were moderated by the authority of the chiefs, and feelings of the soldiers; for we are no longer describing an irruption of the northern savages; and however ferocious they might still appear, time, policy, and religion, had civilized the manners of the French, and still more of the Italians. But a free scope was allowed to their avarice, which was glutted, even in the holy week, by the pillage of Constantinople. The right of victory, unshackled by any promise or treaty, had confiscated the public and private wealth of the Greeks; and every hand, according to its size and strength, might lawfully execute the sentence and seize the forfeiture. A portable and universal standard of exchange was found in the coined and uncoined metals of gold and silver, which each captor at home or abroad might convert into the possessions most suitable to his temper and situation. Of the treasures, which trade and luxury had accumulated, the silks, velvets, furs, the gems, spices, and rich moveables, were the most precious, as they could not be procured for money in the ruder countries of Europe. An order of rapine was instituted; nor was the share of each individual abandoned to industry or chance. Under the tremendous penalties of perjury;

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LX.

Division of
the spoil.

CHAP. excommunication and death, the Latins were
 LX. bound to deliver their plunder into the common stock: three churches were selected for the deposit and distribution of the spoil: a single share was allotted to a foot soldier; two for a serjeant on horseback; four to a knight: and larger proportions according to the rank and merit of the barons and princes. For violating this sacred engagement, a knight belonging to the count of St. Pol was hanged with his shield and coat of arms round his neck: his example might render similar offenders more artful and discreet; but avarice was more powerful than fear; and it is generally believed, that the secret far exceeded the acknowledged plunder. Yet the magnitude of the prize surpassed the largest scale of experience or expectation⁸⁸. After the whole had been equally divided between the French and Venetians, fifty thousand marks were deducted to satisfy the debts of the former and the demands of the latter. The residue of the French amounted to four hundred thousand marks of silver⁸⁹, about eight hundred thousand pounds sterling; nor can I better appreciate the value of that sum in the public and private transactions of the age, than by defining it as seven times the annual revenue of the kingdom of England⁹⁰.

Misery of the
 Greeks.

In this great revolution we enjoy the singular felicity of comparing the narratives of Villehardouin and Nicetas, the opposite feelings of the marshal of Champagne and the Byzantine senator⁹¹. At the first view it should seem that the

wealth of Constantinople was only transferred from one nation to another; and that the loss and sorrow of the Greeks is exactly balanced by the joy and advantage of the Latins. But in the miserable account of war, the gain is never equivalent to the loss, the pleasure to the pain: the smiles of the Latins were transient and fallacious; the Greeks for ever wept over the ruins of their country; and their real calamities were aggravated by sacrilege and mockery. What benefits accrued to the conquerors from the three fires which annihilated so vast a portion of the buildings and riches of the city? What a stock of such things, as could neither be used nor transported, was maliciously or wantonly destroyed? How much treasure was idly wasted in gaming, debauchery, and riot? And what precious objects were bartered for a vile price by the impatience or ignorance of the soldiers, whose reward was stolen by the base industry of the last of the Greeks? Those alone, who had nothing to lose, might derive some profit from the revolution; but the misery of the upper ranks of society is strongly painted in the personal adventures of Nicetas himself. His stately palace had been reduced to ashes in the second conflagration; and the senator, with his family and friends, found an obscure shelter in another house which he possessed near the church of St. Sophia. It was the door of this mean habitation that his friend the Venetian merchant guarded in the disguise of a soldier, till Nicetas could save, by a precipitate flight, the relics of

C H A P. his fortune and the chastity of his daughter. In
 LX. a cold wintry season, these fugitives, nursed in the lap of prosperity, departed on foot; his wife was with child; the desertion of their slaves compelled them to carry their baggage on their own shoulders; and their women, whom they placed in the centre, were exhorted to conceal their beauty with dirt, instead of adorning it with paint and jewels. Every step was exposed to insult and danger: the threats of the strangers were less painful than the taunts of the plebeians, with whom they were now levelled; nor did the exiles breathe in safety till their mournful pilgrimage was concluded at Selymbria, above forty miles from the capital. On the way they overtook the patriarch, without attendance and almost without apparel, riding on an ass, and reduced to a state of apostolical poverty, which, had it been voluntary, might perhaps have been meritorious. In the mean while, his desolate churches were profaned by the licentiousness and party zeal of the Latins. After stripping the gems and pearls, they converted the chalices into drinking-cups; their tables, on which they gamed and feasted, were covered with the pictures of Christ and the saints; and they trampled under foot the most venerable objects of the Christian worship. In the cathedral of St. Sophia, the ample veil of the sanctuary was rent asunder for the sake of the golden fringe; and the altar, a monument of art and riches, was broken in pieces and shared among the captors. Their mules and horses were

Sacrilege and
 mockery.

laden with the wrought silver and gilt carvings, which they tore down from the doors and pulpit; and if the beasts stumbled under the burthen, they were stabbed by their impatient drivers, and the holy pavement streamed with their impure blood. A prostitute was seated on the throne of the patriarch; and that daughter of Belial, as she is styled, sung and danced in the church, to ridicule the hymns and processions of the Orientals. Nor were the repositories of the royal dead secure from violation: in the church of the apostles, the tombs of the emperors were rifled; and it is said, that after six centuries the corpse of Justinian was found without any signs of decay or putrefaction. In the streets, the French and Flemings clothed themselves and their horses in painted robes and flowing head-dresses of linen; and the coarse intemperance of their feasts⁹² insulted the splendid sobriety of the East. To expose the arms of a people of scribes and scholars, they affected to display a pen, an ink-horn, and a sheet of paper, without discerning that the instruments of science and valour were *alike* feeble and useless in the hands of the modern Greeks.

Their reputation and their language encouraged them, however, to despise the ignorance, and to overlook the progress, of the Latins⁹³. In the love of the arts, the national difference was still more obvious and real; the Greeks preserved with reverence the works of their ancestors, which they could not imitate; and, in the destruction of the statues of Constantinople, we are provoked

Destruction of
the statues.

C H A P.
IX.

to join in the complaints and invectives of the Byzantine historian⁹⁴. We have seen how the rising city was adorned by the vanity and despotism of the Imperial founder: in the ruins of paganism, some gods and heroes were saved from the axe of superstition; and the forum and hippodrome were dignified with the relics of a better age. Several of these are described by Nicetas⁹⁵, in a florid and affected style; and, from his descriptions, I shall select some interesting particulars.

1. The victorious charioteers were cast in bronze, at their own, or the public, charge, and fitly placed in the hippodrome: they stood aloft in their chariots, wheeling round the goal; the spectators could admire their attitude, and judge of the resemblance; and of these figures, the most perfect might have been transported from the Olympic stadium.
2. The sphynx, river horse, and crocodile, denote the climate and manufacture of Egypt, and the spoils of that ancient province.
3. The she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus; a subject alike pleasing to the *old* and the *new* Romans; but which could rarely be treated before the decline of the Greek sculpture.
4. An eagle holding and tearing a serpent in his talons; a domestic monument of the Byzantines, which they ascribed, not to a human artist, but to the magic power of the philosopher Apollonius, who, by this talisman, delivered the city from such venomous reptiles.
5. An ass and his driver; which were erected by Augustus in his colony of Nicopolis, to commemorate a verbal omen of

the victory of Actium. 6. An equestrian statue; which passed, in the vulgar opinion, for Joshua, the Jewish conqueror, stretching out his hand to stop the course of the descending sun. A more classical tradition recognised the figures of Bellerophon and Pegasus; and the free attitude of the steed seemed to mark that he trod on air, rather than on the earth. 7. A square and lofty obelisk of brass; the sides were embossed with a variety of picturesque and rural scenes: birds singing; rustics labouring, or playing on their pipes; sheep bleating; lambs skipping; the sea, and a scene of fish and fishing; little naked cupids laughing, playing, and pelting each other with apples; and, on the summit, a female figure turning with the slightest breath, and thence denominated *the wind's attendant*. 8. The Phrygian shepherd presenting to Venus the prize of beauty, the apple of discord. 9. The incomparable statue of Helen; which is delineated by Nicetas in the words of admiration and love: her well-turned feet, snowy arms, rosy lips, bewitching smiles, swimming eyes, arched eye-brows, the harmony of her shape, the lightness of her drapery, and her flowing locks that waved in the wind: a beauty that might have moved her Barbarian destroyers to pity and remorse. 10. The manly or divine form of Hercules⁹⁶, as he was restored to life by the master-hand of Lysippus; of such magnitude, that his thumb was equal to the waist, his leg to the stature, of a common man⁹⁷; his chest ample, his shoulders broad, his limbs

strong and muscular, his hair curled, his aspect commanding. Without his bow, or quiver, or club, his lion's skin carelessly thrown over him, he was seated on an osier basket, his right leg and arm stretched to the utmost, his left knee bent, and supporting his elbow, his head reclining on his left hand, his countenance indignant and pensive. 11. A colossal statue of Juno, which had once adorned her temple of Samos; the enormous head by four yoke of oxen was laboriously drawn to the palace. 12. Another colossus, of Pallas or Minerva, thirty feet in height, and representing with admirable spirit the attributes and character of the martial maid. Before we accuse the Latins, it is just to remark, that this Pallas was destroyed after the first siege, by the fear and superstition of the Greeks themselves⁹⁸. The other statues of brass which I have enumerated, were broken and melted by the unfeeling avarice of the crusaders: the cost and labour were consumed in a moment; the soul of genius evaporated in smoke; and the remnant of base metal was coined into money for the payment of the troops. Bronze is not the most durable of monuments: from the marble forms of Phidias and Praxiteles, the Latins might turn aside with stupid contempt⁹⁹; but unless they were crushed by some accidental injury, those useless stones stood secure on their pedestals¹⁰⁰. The most enlightened of the strangers, above the gross and sensual pursuits of their countrymen, more piously exercised the right of conquest in

the search and seizure of the relics of the saints ¹⁰¹. C H A P.
 Immense was the supply of heads and bones, LX.
 crosses and images, that were scattered by this
 revolution over the churches of Europe; and
 such was the encrease of pilgrimage and oblation,
 that no branch, perhaps, of more lucrative plunder
 was imported from the East ¹⁰². Of the writings
 of antiquity, many that still existed in the twelfth
 century are now lost. But the pilgrims were not
 solicitous to save or transport the volumes of an
 unknown tongue: the perishable substance of
 paper or parchment can only be preserved by
 the multiplicity of copies; the literature of the
 Greeks had almost centered in the metropolis;
 and, without computing the extent of our loss,
 we may drop a tear over the libraries that have
 perished in the triple fire of Constantinople ¹⁰³.

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*Partition of the Empire by the French and Venetians.
 — Five Latin Emperors of the Houses of Flanders
 and Courtenay. — Their Wars against the Bulgarians
 and Greeks. — Weakness and Poverty of the Latin
 Empire. — Recovery of Constantinople by the Greeks.
 — General Consequences of the Crusades.*

C H A P.

LXI.

Election of
 the emperor
 Baldwin I.

A. D. 1204,
 May 9 — 16.

AFTER the death of the lawful princes, the French and Venetians, confident of justice and victory, agreed to divide and regulate their future possessions¹. It was stipulated by treaty, that twelve electors, six of either nation, should be nominated; that a majority should chuse the emperor of the East; and that, if the votes were equal, the decision of chance should ascertain the successful candidate. To him, with all the titles and prerogatives of the Byzantine throne, they assigned the two palaces of Boucoleon and Blachernæ, with a fourth part of the Greek monarchy. It was defined that the three remaining portions should be equally shared between the republic of Venice and the barons of France; that each feudatory, with an honourable exception for the doge, should acknowledge and perform the duties of homage and military service to the supreme head of the empire: that the nation
 which

which gave an emperor, should resign to their brethren the choice of a patriarch; and that the pilgrims, whatever might be their impatience to visit the Holy Land, should devote another year to the conquest and defence of the Greek provinces. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Latins, the treaty was confirmed and executed; and the first and most important step was the creation of an emperor. The six electors of the French nation were all ecclesiastics, the abbot of Loces, the archbishop elect of Acre in Palestine, and the bishops of Troyes, Soissons, Halberstadt, and Bethlehem, the last of whom exercised in the camp the office of pope's legate: their profession and knowledge were respectable; and as *they* could not be the objects, they were best qualified to be the authors, of the choice. The six Venetians were the principal servants of the state, and in this list the noble families of Querini and Contarini are still proud to discover their ancestors. The twelve assembled in the chapel of the palace; and after the solemn invocation of the Holy Ghost, they proceeded to deliberate and vote. A just impulse of respect and gratitude prompted them to crown the virtues of the doge; his wisdom had inspired their enterprise; and the most youthful knights might envy and applaud the exploits of blindness and age. But the patriot Dandolo was devoid of all personal ambition, and fully satisfied that he had been judged worthy to reign. His nomination was over-ruled by the Venetians themselves: his countrymen, and perhaps his

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friends², represented, with the eloquence of truth, the mischiefs that might arise to national freedom and the common cause, from the union of two incompatible characters, of the first magistrate of a republic and the emperor of the East. The exclusion of the doge left room for the more equal merits of Boniface and Baldwin; and at their names all meaner candidates respectfully withdrew. The marquis of Montferrat was recommended by his mature age and fair reputation, by the choice of the adventurers and the wishes of the Greeks; nor can I believe that Venice, the mistress of the sea, could be seriously apprehensive of a petty lord at the foot of the Alps³. But the count of Flanders was the chief of a wealthy and warlike people; he was valiant, pious, and chaste; in the prime of life, since he was only thirty-two years of age; a descendant of Charlemagne, a cousin of the king of France, and a compeer of the prelates and barons who had yielded with reluctance to the command of a foreigner. Without the chapel, these barons, with the doge and marquis at their head, expected the decision of the twelve electors. It was announced by the bishop of Soissons, in the name of his colleagues: "Ye have sworn to
" obey the prince whom we should chuse; by
" our unanimous suffrage, Baldwin count of
" Flanders and Hainault is now your sovereign,
" and the emperor of the East." He was saluted with loud applause, and the proclamation was re-echoed through the city by the joy of the

Latins and the trembling adulation of the Greeks. Boniface was the first to kiss the hand of his rival, and to raise him on the buckler; and Baldwin was transported to the cathedral, and solemnly invested with the purple buskins. At the end of three weeks he was crowned by the legate, in the vacancy of a patriarch; but the Venetian clergy soon filled the chapter of St. Sophia, seated Thomas Morosini on the ecclesiastical throne, and employed every art to perpetuate in their own nation the honours and benefices of the Greek church*. Without delay, the successor of Constantine instructed Palestine, France, and Rome, of this memorable revolution. To Palestine he sent, as a trophy, the gates of Constantinople, and the chain of the harbour'; and adopted, from the Assize of Jerusalem, the laws or customs best adapted to a French colony and conquest in the East. In his epistles, the natives of France are encouraged to swell that colony, and to secure that conquest; to people a magnificent city and a fertile land, which will reward the labours both of the priest and the soldier. He congratulates the Roman pontiff on the restoration of his authority in the East; invites him to extinguish the Greek schism by his presence in a general council; and implores his blessing and forgiveness for the disobedient pilgrims. Prudence and dignity are blended in the answer of Innocent*. In the subversion of the Byzantine empire, he arraigns the vices of man, and adores the providence of God: the conquerors will be

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LXI.

absolved or condemned by their future conduct; the validity of their treaty depends on the judgment of St. Peter; but he inculcates their most sacred duty of establishing a just subordination of obedience and tribute, from the Greeks to the Latins, from the magistrate to the clergy, and from the clergy to the pope.

Division of
the Greek
empire.

In the division of the Greek provinces⁷, the share of the Venetians was more ample than that of the Latin emperor. No more than one fourth was appropriated to his domain; a clear moiety of the remainder was reserved for Venice; and the other moiety was distributed among the adventurers of France and Lombardy. The venerable Dandolo was proclaimed despot of Romania, and invested after the Greek fashion with the purple buskins. He ended at Constantinople his long and glorious life; and if the prerogative was personal, the title was used by his successors till the middle of the fourteenth century, with the singular though true addition of lords of one fourth and a half of the Roman empire⁸. The doge, a slave of state, was seldom permitted to depart from the helm of the republic; but his place was supplied by the *bail* or regent, who exercised a supreme jurisdiction over the colony of Venetians: they possessed three of the eight quarters of the city; and his independent tribunal was composed of six judges, four counsellors, two chamberlains, two fiscal advocates, and a constable. Their long experience of the Eastern trade enabled them to select their portion with

discernment: they had rashly accepted the dominion and defence of Adrianople; but it was the more reasonable aim of their policy to form a chain of factories, and cities, and islands, along the maritime coast, from the neighbourhood of Ragusa to the Hellespont and the Bosphorus. The labour and cost of such extensive conquests exhausted their treasury: they abandoned their maxims of government, adopted a feudal system, and contented themselves with the homage of their nobles⁹, for the possessions which these private vassals undertook to reduce and maintain. And thus it was, that the family of Sanut acquired the dutchy of Naxos, which involved the greatest part of the Archipelago. For the price of ten thousand marks, the republic purchased of the marquis of Montferrat the fertile island of Crete or Candia with the ruins of an hundred cities¹⁰; but its improvement was stunted by the proud and narrow spirit of an aristocracy¹¹; and the wisest senators would confess that the sea, not the land, was the treasury of St. Mark. In the moiety of the adventurers, the marquis Boniface might claim the most liberal reward; and, besides the isle of Crete, his exclusion from the throne was compensated by the royal title and the provinces beyond the Hellespont. But he prudently exchanged that distant and difficult conquest for the kingdom of Thessalonica or Macedonia, twelve days journey from the capital, where he might be supported by the neighbouring powers of his brother-in-law the king of

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Hungary. His progress was hailed by the voluntary or reluctant acclamations of the natives; and Greece, the proper and ancient Greece, again received a Latin conqueror¹², who trod with indifference that classic ground. He viewed with a careless eye the beauties of the valley of Tempe; traversed with a cautious step the streights of Thermopylæ; occupied the unknown cities of Thebes, Athens, and Argos; and assaulted the fortifications of Corinth and Napoli¹³, which resisted his arms. The lots of the Latin pilgrims were regulated by chance, or choice, or subsequent exchange; and they abused, with intemperate joy, their triumph over the lives and fortunes of a great people. After a minute survey of the provinces, they weighed in the scales of avarice the revenue of each district, the advantage of the situation, and the ample or scanty supplies for the maintenance of soldiers and horses. Their presumption claimed and divided the long-lost dependencies of the Roman sceptre: the Nile and Euphrates rolled through their imaginary realms; and happy was the warrior who drew for his prize the palace of the Turkish sultan of Iconium¹⁴. I shall not descend to the pedigree of families and the rent-roll of estates, but I wish to specify that the counts of Blois and St. Pol were invested with the duchy of Nice and the lordship of Demotica¹⁵: the principal fiefs were held by the service of constable, chamberlain, cup-bearer, butler, and chief cook; and our historian, Jeffrey of Villehardouin, obtained a fair

establishment on the banks of the Hebrus, and united the double office of marshal of Champagne and Romania. At the head of his knights and archers, each baron mounted on horseback to secure the possession of his share, and their first efforts were generally successful. But the public force was weakened by their dispersion; and a thousand quarrels must arise under a law, and among men, whose sole umpire was the sword. Within three months after the conquest of Constantinople, the emperor and the king of Thesalonica drew their hostile followers into the field; they were reconciled by the authority of the doge, the advice of the marshal, and the firm freedom of their peers¹⁶.

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Two fugitives, who had reigned at Constantinople, still asserted the title of emperor; and the subjects of their fallen throne might be moved to pity by the misfortunes of the elder Alexius, or excited to revenge by the spirit of Mourzoufle. A domestic alliance, a common interest, a similar guilt, and the merit of extinguishing his enemies, a brother and a nephew, induced the more recent usurper to unite with the former the relics of his power. Mourzoufle was received with smiles and honours in the camp of his father Alexius; but the wicked can never love, and should rarely trust, their fellow-criminals: he was seized in the bath, deprived of his eyes, stripped of his troops and treasures, and turned out to wander an object of horror and contempt to those who with more propriety could hate, and with more justice

Revolt of the
Greeks,
A. D. 1204,
etc.

C H A P.
LXI.

could punish, the assassin of the emperor Isaac, and his son. As the tyrant, pursued by fear or remorse, was stealing over to Asia, he was seized by the Latins of Constantinople, and condemned, after an open trial, to an ignominious death. His judges debated the mode of his execution, the axe, the wheel, or the stake; and it was resolved that Mourzoufle¹⁷ should ascend the Theodosian column, a pillar of white marble of one hundred and forty-seven feet in height¹⁸. From the summit he was cast down headlong, and dashed in pieces on the pavement, in the presence of innumerable spectators, who filled the forum of Taurus, and admired the accomplishment of an old prediction, which was explained by this singular event¹⁹. The fate of Alexius is less tragical: he was sent by the marquis a captive to Italy, and a gift to the king of the Romans; but he had not much to applaud his fortune, if the sentence of imprisonment and exile were changed from a fortress in the Alps to a monastery in Asia. But his daughter, before the national calamity, had been given in marriage to a young hero who continued the succession, and restored the throne, of the Greek princes²⁰. The valour of Theodore Lascaris was signalised in the two sieges of Constantinople. After the flight of Mourzoufle, when the Latins were already in the city, he offered himself as their emperor to the soldiers and people: and his ambition, which might be virtuous, was undoubtedly brave.

Theodore
Lascaris, em-
peror of Nice,
A. D.
1204—1222.

Could he have infused a soul into the multitude, they might have crushed the strangers under their feet: their abject despair refused his aid, and Theodore retired to breathe the air of freedom in Anatolia, beyond the immediate view and pursuit of the conquerors. Under the title, at first of despot, and afterwards of emperor, he drew to his standard the bolder spirits, who were fortified against slavery by the contempt of life; and as every means was lawful for the public safety, implored without scruple the alliance of the Turkish sultan. Nice, where Theodore established his residence, Prusa and Philadelphia, Smyrna and Ephesus, opened their gates to their deliverer: he derived strength and reputation from his victories, and even from his defeats; and the successor of Constantine preserved a fragment of the empire from the banks of the Mæander to the suburbs of Nicomedia, and at length of Constantinople. Another portion, distant and obscure, was possessed by the lineal heir of the Comneni, a son of the virtuous Manuel, a grandson of the tyrant Andronicus. His name was Alexius; and the epithet of great was applied perhaps to his stature, rather than to his exploits. By the indulgence of the Angeli, he was appointed governor or duke of Trebizond²¹: his birth gave him ambition, the revolution independence; and without changing his title, he reigned in peace from Sinope to the Phasis, along the coast of the Black Sea. His nameless son and successor is described as the vassal of the

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LXI.

The dukes
and emperors
of Trebi-
zond.

C H A P. sultan, whom he served with two hundred lances;
LXI. that Comnenian prince was no more than duke

The despots
of Epirus.

of Trebizond, and the title of emperor was first assumed by the pride and envy of the grandson of Alexius. In the West, a third fragment was saved from the common shipwreck by Michael, a bastard of the house of Angeli, who, before the revolution, had been known as an hostage, a soldier, and a rebel. His flight from the camp of the marquis Boniface secured his freedom; by his marriage with the governor's daughter, he commanded the important place of Durazzo, assumed the title of despot, and founded a strong and conspicuous principality in Epirus, Ætolia, and Thessaly, which have ever been peopled by a warlike race. The Greeks, who had offered their service to their new sovereigns, were excluded by the haughty Latins ²² from all civil and military honours, as a nation born to tremble and obey. Their resentment prompted them to shew that they might have been useful friends, since they could be dangerous enemies: their nerves were braced by adversity: whatever was learned or holy, whatever was noble or valiant, rolled away into the independent states of Trebizond, Epirus, and Nice; and a single patrician is marked by the ambiguous praise of attachment and loyalty to the Franks. The vulgar herd of the cities and the country, would have gladly submitted to a mild and regular servitude; and the transient disorders of war would have been obliterated by some years of industry and peace.

But peace was banished and industry was crushed, in the disorders of the feudal system. The *Roman* emperors of Constantinople, if they were endowed with abilities, were armed with power for the protection of their subjects: their laws were wise, and their administration was simple. The Latin throne was filled by a titular prince, the chief, and often the servant, of his licentious confederates: the fiefs of the empire, from a kingdom to a castle, were held and ruled by the sword of the barons: and their discord, poverty, and ignorance, extended the ramifications of tyranny to the most sequestered villages. The Greeks were oppressed by the double weight of the priest, who was invested with temporal power, and of the soldier, who was inflamed by fanatic hatred; and the insuperable bar of religion and language for ever separated the stranger and the native. As long as the crusaders were united at Constantinople, the memory of their conquest, and the terror of their arms, imposed silence on the captive land: their dispersion betrayed the smallness of their numbers and the defects of their discipline; and some failures and mischances revealed the secret, that they were not invincible. As the fear of the Greeks abated, their hatred encreased. They murmured; they conspired; and before a year of slavery had elapsed, they implored, or accepted, the succour of a Barbarian, whose power they had felt, and whose gratitude they trusted²³.

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LXI.

The Bulga-
rian war,
A. D. 1205.

The Latin conquerors had been saluted with a solemn and early embassy from John, or Joannice, or Calo-John, the revolted chief of the Bulgarians and Walachians. He deemed himself their brother, as the votary of the Roman pontiff, from whom he had received the regal title and an holy banner; and in the subversion of the Greek monarchy, he might aspire to the name of their friend and accomplice. But Calo-John was astonished to find, that the count of Flanders had assumed the pomp and pride of the successors of Constantine; and his ambassadors were dismissed with an haughty message, that the rebel must deserve a pardon, by touching with his forehead the footstool of the Imperial throne. His resentment²⁴ would have exhaled in acts of violence and blood; his cooler policy watched the rising discontent of the Greeks; affected a tender concern for their sufferings; and promised, that their first struggles for freedom should be supported by his person and kingdom. The conspiracy was propagated by national hatred, the firmest band of association and secrecy: the Greeks were impatient to sheath their daggers in the breasts of the victorious strangers; but the execution was prudently delayed, till Henry, the emperor's brother, had transported the flower of his troops beyond the Hellespont. Most of the towns and villages of Thrace were true to the moment and the signal: and the Latins, without arms or suspicion, were slaughtered by the vile and merciless revenge of their

slaves. From Demotica, the first scene of the massacre, the surviving vassals of the count of St. Pol escaped to Adrianople; but the French and Venetians, who occupied that city, were slain or expelled by the furious multitude; the garrisons that could effect their retreat, fell back on each other towards the metropolis; and the fortresses, that separately stood against the rebels, were ignorant of each other's and of their sovereign's fate. The voice of fame and fear announced the revolt of the Greeks and the rapid approach of their Bulgarian ally; and Calo-John, not depending on the forces of his own kingdom, had drawn from the Scythian wilderness a body of fourteen thousand Comans, who drank, as it was said, the blood of their captives, and sacrificed the Christians on the altars of their gods²⁵.

Alarmed by this sudden and growing danger, the emperor dispatched a swift messenger to recall count Henry and his troops; and had Baldwin expected the return of his gallant brother, with a supply of twenty thousand Armenians, he might have encountered the invader with equal numbers and a decisive superiority of arms and discipline. But the spirit of chivalry could seldom discriminate caution from cowardice; and the emperor took the field with an hundred and forty knights, and their train of archers and serjeants. The marshal, who dissuaded and obeyed, led the vanguard in their march to Adrianople; the main body was commanded by the count of

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LXI.

Defeat and
captivity of
Baldwin,
A. D. 1205,
April 15.

Blois; the aged doge of Venice followed with the rear; and their scanty numbers were encreased from all sides by the fugitive Latins. They undertook to besiege the rebels of Adrianople; and such was the pious tendency of the crusades, that they employed the holy week in pillaging the country for their subsistence, and in framing engines for the destruction of their fellow-Christians. But the Latins were soon interrupted and alarmed by the light cavalry of the Comans, who boldly skirmished to the edge of their imperfect lines: and a proclamation was issued by the marshal of Romania, that, on the trumpet's sound, the cavalry should mount and form; but that none, under pain of death, should abandon themselves to a desultory and dangerous pursuit. This wise injunction was first disobeyed by the count of Blois, who involved the emperor in his rashness and ruin. The Comans, of the Parthian or Tartar school, fled before their first charge; but after a career of two leagues, when the knights and their horses were almost breathless, they suddenly turned, rallied, and encompassed the heavy squadrons of the Franks. The count was slain on the field; the emperor was made prisoner; and if the one disdained to fly, if the other refused to yield, their personal bravery made a poor atonement for their ignorance, or neglect, of the duties of a general²⁶.

Proud of his victory and his royal prize, the Bulgarian advanced to relieve Adrianople and atchieve the destruction of the Latins. They must

inevitably have been destroyed, if the marshal of Romania had not displayed a cool courage and consummate skill; uncommon in all ages, but most uncommon in those times, when war was a passion, rather than a science. His grief and fears were poured into the firm and faithful bosom of the doge; but in the camp he diffused an assurance of safety, which could only be realized by the general belief. All day he maintained his perilous station between the city and the Barbarians: Villehardouin decamped in silence, at the dead of night; and his masterly retreat of three days would have deserved the praise of Xenophon and the ten thousand. In the rear, the marshal supported the weight of the pursuit; in the front, he moderated the impatience of the fugitives; and wherever the Comans approached, they were repelled by a line of impenetrable spears. On the third day, the weary troops beheld the sea, the solitary town of Rodosto²⁷, and their friends, who had landed from the Asiatic shore. They embraced, they wept; but they united their arms and counsels; and, in his brother's absence, count Henry assumed the regency of the empire, at once in a state of childhood and caducity²⁸. If the Comans withdrew from the summer heats, seven thousand Latins, in the hour of danger, deserted Constantinople, their brethren, and their vows. Some partial success was overbalanced by the loss of one hundred and twenty knights in the field of Rufium; and of the Imperial domain, no more was left, than the capital, with two or

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Retreat of
the Latins.

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LXI.Death of the
emperor.

three adjacent fortresses on the shores of Europe and Asia. The king of Bulgaria was resolute and inexorable; and Calo-John respectfully eluded the demands of the pope, who conjured his new proselyte to restore peace and the emperor to the afflicted Latins. The deliverance of Baldwin was no longer, he said, in the power of man: that prince had died in prison; and the manner of his death is variously related by ignorance and credulity. The lovers of a tragic legend will be pleased to hear, that the royal captive was tempted by the amorous queen of the Bulgarians; that his chaste refusal exposed him to the falsehood of a woman and the jealousy of a savage; that his hands and feet were severed from his body; that his bleeding trunk was cast among the carcases of dogs and horses; and that he breathed three days, before he was devoured by the birds of prey²⁹. About twenty years afterwards, in a wood of the Netherlands, an hermit announced himself as the true Baldwin, the emperor of Constantinople, and lawful sovereign of Flanders. He related the wonders of his escape, his adventures, and his penance, among a people prone to believe and to rebel; and, in the first transport, Flanders acknowledged her long-lost sovereign. A short examination before the French court detected the impostor, who was punished with an ignominious death; but the Flemings still adhered to the pleasing error; and the countess Jane is accused by the gravest historians of sacrificing to her ambition the life of an unfortunate father³⁰. In

In all civilized hostility, a treaty is established for the exchange or ransom of prisoners; and if their captivity be prolonged, their condition is known, and they are treated according to their rank with humanity or honour. But the savage Bulgarian was a stranger to the laws of war; his prisons were involved in darkness and silence; and above a year elapsed before the Latins could be assured of the death of Baldwin, before his brother, the regent Henry, would consent to assume the title of emperor. His moderation was applauded by the Greeks as an act of rare and inimitable virtue. Their light and perfidious ambition was eager to seize or anticipate the moment of a vacancy, while a law of succession, the guardian both of the prince and people, was gradually defined and confirmed in the hereditary monarchies of Europe. In the support of the Eastern empire, Henry was gradually left without an associate, as the heroes of the crusade retired from the world or from the war. The doge of Venice, the venerable Dandolo, in the fulness of years and glory, sunk into the grave. The marquis of Montferrat was slowly recalled from the Peloponnesian war to the revenge of Baldwin and the defence of Thessalonica. Some nice disputes of feudal homage and service, were reconciled in a personal interview between the emperor and the king: they were firmly united by mutual esteem and the common danger; and their alliance was sealed by the nuptials of Henry with the daughter of the Italian prince. He soon deplored the loss

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Reign and
character of
Henry,

A. D. 1206,

August 20—

A. D. 1216,

June 11.

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of his friend and father. At the persuasion of some faithful Greeks, Boniface made a bold and successful inroad among the hills of Rhodope: the Bulgarians fled on his approach; they assembled to harass his retreat. On the intelligence that his rear was attacked, without waiting for any defensive armour, he leaped on horseback, couched his lance, and drove the enemies before him; but in the rash pursuit he was pierced with a mortal wound; and the head of the king of Thessalonica was presented to Calo-John, who enjoyed the honours, without the merit, of victory. It is here, at this melancholy event, that the pen or the voice of Jeffrey of Villehardouin seems to drop or to expire³¹; and if he still exercised his military office of marshal of Romania, his subsequent exploits are buried in oblivion³². The character of Henry was not unequal to his arduous situation: in the siege of Constantinople, and beyond the Hellespont, he had deserved the fame of a valiant knight and a skilful commander; and his courage was tempered with a degree of prudence and mildness unknown to his impetuous brother. In the double war against the Greeks of Asia and the Bulgarians of Europe, he was ever the foremost on shipboard or on horseback; and though he cautiously provided for the success of his arms, the drooping Latins were often roused by his example to save and to second their fearless emperor. But such efforts, and some supplies of men and money from France, were of less avail than the errors, the cruelty, and death,

of their most formidable adversary. When the despair of the Greek subjects invited Calo-John as their deliverer, they hoped that he would protect their liberty and adopt their laws: they were soon taught to compare the degrees of national ferocity, and to execrate the savage conqueror, who no longer dissembled his intention of dispeopling Thrace, of demolishing the cities, and of transplanting the inhabitants beyond the Danube. Many towns and villages of Thrace were already evacuated: an heap of ruins marked the place of Philippopolis, and a similar calamity was expected at Demotica and Adrianople, by the first authors of the revolt. They raised a cry of grief and repentance to the throne of Henry; the emperor alone had the magnanimity to forgive and trust them. No more than four hundred knights, with their serjeants and archers, could be assembled under his banner; and with this slender force he fought and repulsed the Bulgarian, who, besides his infantry, was at the head of forty thousand horse. In this expedition, Henry felt the difference between an hostile and a friendly country; the remaining cities were preserved by his arms; and the savage, with shame and loss, was compelled to relinquish his prey. The siege of Thessalonica was the last of the evils which Calo-John inflicted or suffered; he was stabbed in the night in his tent; and the general, perhaps the assassin, who found him weltering in his blood, ascribed the blow with general applause to the lance of St. Demetrius³³. After several victories,

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the prudence of Henry concluded an honourable peace with the successor of the tyrant, and with the Greek princes of Nice and Epirus. If he ceded some doubtful limits, an ample kingdom was reserved for himself and his feudatories; and his reign, which lasted only ten years, afforded a short interval of prosperity and peace. Far above the narrow policy of Baldwin and Boniface, he freely entrusted to the Greeks the most important offices of the state and army: and this liberality of sentiment and practice, was the more seasonable, as the princes of Nice and Epirus had already learned to seduce and employ the mercenary valour of the Latins. It was the aim of Henry to unite and reward his deserving subjects of every nation and language: but he appeared less solicitous to accomplish the impracticable union of the two churches. Pelagius, the pope's legate, who acted as the sovereign of Constantinople, had interdicted the worship of the Greeks, and sternly imposed the payment of tithes, the double procession of the Holy Ghost, and a blind obedience to the Roman pontiff. As the weaker party, they pleaded the duties of conscience, and implored the rights of toleration: "Our bodies," they said, "are Cæsar's, but our souls belong only to God." The persecution was checked by the firmness of the emperor³⁴; and if we can believe that the same prince was poisoned by the Greeks themselves, we must entertain a contemptible idea of the sense and gratitude of mankind. His valour was a vulgar attribute, which

he shared with ten thousand knights; but Henry possessed the superior courage to oppose, in a superstitious age, the pride and avarice of the clergy. In the cathedral of St. Sophia he presumed to place his throne on the right-hand of the patriarch; and this presumption excited the sharpest censure of pope Innocent the third. By a salutary edict, one of the first examples of the laws of mortmain, he prohibited the alienation of fiefs; many of the Latins, desirous of returning to Europe, resigned their estates to the church for a spiritual or temporal reward; these holy lands were immediately discharged from military service; and a colony of soldiers would have been gradually transformed into a college of priests³⁵.

The virtuous Henry died at Theſſalonica, in the defence of that kingdom, and of an infant, the son of his friend Boniface. In the two first emperors of Constantinople the male line of the counts of Flanders was extinct. But their sister Yolande was the wife of a French prince, the mother of a numerous progeny; and one of her daughters had married Andrew king of Hungary, a brave and pious champion of the cross. By seating him on the Byzantine throne, the barons of Romania would have acquired the forces of a neighbouring and warlike kingdom; but the prudent Andrew revered the laws of succession; and the princess Yolande, with her husband Peter of Courtenay, count of Auxerre, was invited by the Latins to assume the empire of the East. The

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Peter of
Courtenay,
emperor of
Constantino-
ple,
A. D. 1217,
April 9.

C H A P. royal birth of his father, the noble origin of his
 LXI. mother, recommended to the barons of France
 the first cousin of their king. His reputation was
 fair, his possessions were ample, and, in the
 bloody crusade against the Albigeois, the soldiers
 and the priests had been abundantly satisfied of
 his zeal and valour. Vanity might applaud the
 elevation of a French emperor of Constantinople;
 but prudence must pity, rather than envy, his
 treacherous and imaginary greatness. To assert
 and adorn his title, he was reduced to sell or
 mortgage the best of his patrimony. By these
 expedients, the liberality of his royal kinsman
 Philip Augustus, and the national spirit of chivalry,
 he was enabled to pass the Alps at the head of
 one hundred and forty knights, and five thousand
 five hundred serjeants and archers. After some
 hesitation, pope Honorius the third was persuaded
 to crown the successor of Constantine; but he
 performed the ceremony in a church without the
 walls, lest he should seem to imply or to bestow
 any right of sovereignty over the ancient capital
 of the empire. The Venetians had engaged to
 transport Peter and his forces beyond the Adriatic,
 and the empress, with her four children, to the
 Byzantine palace; but they required, as the price
 of their service, that he should recover Durazzo
 from the despot of Epirus. Michael Angelus, or
 Comnenus, the first of his dynasty, had bequeath-
 ed the succession of his power and ambition to
 Theodore, his legitimate brother, who already
 threatened and invaded the establishments of the

Latins. After discharging his debt by a fruitless assault, the emperor raised the siege to prosecute a long and perilous journey over land from Durazzo to Thessalonica. He was soon lost in the mountains of Epirus: the passes were fortified; his provisions exhausted: he was delayed and deceived by a treacherous negociation; and, after Peter of Courtenay and the Roman legate had been arrested in a banquet, the French troops, without leaders or hopes, were eager to exchange their arms for the delusive promise of mercy and bread.

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The Vatican thundered; and the impious Theodore was threatened with the vengeance of earth and heaven: but the captive emperor and his soldiers were forgotten, and the reproaches of the pope are confined to the imprisonment of his legate. No sooner was he satisfied by the deliverance of the priest and a promise of spiritual obedience, than he pardoned and protected the despot of Epirus. His peremptory commands suspended the ardour of the Venetians and the king of Hungary; and it was only by a natural or untimely death ³⁶ that Peter of Courtenay was released from his hopeless captivity ³⁷.

His captivity
and death,
A. D.
1217 — 1219.

The long ignorance of his fate, and the presence of the lawful sovereign, of Yolande, his wife or widow, delayed the proclamation of a new emperor. Before her death, and in the midst of her grief, she was delivered of a son, who was named Baldwin, the last and most unfortunate of the Latin princes of Constantinople. His birth endeared him to the barons of Romania; but his

Robert emperor of Constantinople,
A. D.
1221 — 1228.

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childhood would have prolonged the troubles of a minority, and his claims were superseded by the elder claims of his brethren. The first of these, Philip of Courtenay, who derived from his mother the inheritance of Namur, had the wisdom to prefer the substance of a marquisate to the shadow of an empire; and on his refusal, Robert, the second of the sons of Peter and Yolande, was called to the throne of Constantinople. Warned by his father's mischance, he pursued his slow and secure journey through Germany and along the Danube: a passage was opened by his sister's marriage with the king of Hungary; and the emperor Robert was crowned by the patriarch in the cathedral of St. Sophia. But his reign was an æra of calamity and disgrace; and the colony, as it was styled, of NEW FRANCE yielded on all sides to the Greeks of Nice and Epirus. After a victory, which he owed to his perfidy rather than his courage, Theodore Angelus entered the kingdom of Thessalonica, expelled the feeble Demetrius, the son of the marquis Boniface, erected his standard on the walls of Adrianople; and added, by his vanity, a third or a fourth name to the list of rival emperors. The relics of the Asiatic province were swept away by John Vataces, the son-in-law and successor of Theodore Lascaris, and who, in a triumphant reign of thirty-three years, displayed the virtues both of peace and war. Under his discipline the swords of the French mercenaries were the most effectual instrument of

his conquests, and their desertion from the service of their country was at once a symptom and a cause of the rising ascendant of the Greeks. By the construction of a fleet, he obtained the command of the Hellespont, reduced the islands of Lesbos and Rhodes, attacked the Venetians of Candia, and intercepted the rare and parsimonious succours of the West. Once, and once only, the Latin emperor sent an army against Vataces; and in the defeat of that army, the veteran knights, the last of the original conquerors, were left on the field of battle. But the success of a foreign enemy was less painful to the pusillanimous Robert than the insolence of his Latin subjects, who confounded the weakness of the emperor and of the empire. His personal misfortunes will prove the anarchy of the government and the ferociousness of the times. The amorous youth had neglected his Greek bride, the daughter of Vataces, to introduce into the palace a beautiful maid, of a private, though noble, family of Artois; and her mother had been tempted by the lustre of the purple to forfeit her engagements with a gentleman of Burgundy. His love was converted into rage; he assembled his friends, forced the palace gates, threw the mother into the sea, and inhumanly cut off the nose and lips of the wife or concubine of the emperor. Instead of punishing the offender, the barons avowed and applauded the savage deed³⁸, which, as a prince and as a man, it was impossible that Baldwin should forgive. He

C H A P. escaped from the 'guilty city to implore the justice
LXI. or compassion of the pope : the emperor was
coolly exhorted to return to his station ; be-
fore he could obey, he sunk under the weight
of grief, shame, and impotent resentment ³⁹.

Baldwin II.
and John of
Brienne, em-
perors of
Constanti-
nople,
A. D.

1228 — 1237.

It was only in the age of chivalry, that valour could ascend from a private station to the thrones of Jerusalem and Constantinople. The titular kingdom of Jerusalem had devolved to Mary, the daughter of Isabella and Conrad of Montferrat, and the grand-daughter of Almeric or Amaury. She was given to John of Brienne, of a noble family in Champagne, by the public voice, and the judgment of Philip Augustus, who named him as the most worthy champion of the Holy Land ⁴⁰. In the fifth crusade, he led an hundred thousand Latins to the conquest of Egypt; by him the siege of Damietta was atchieved; and the subsequent failure was justly ascribed to the pride and avarice of the legate. After the marriage of his daughter with Frederic the second ⁴¹, he was provoked by the emperor's ingratitude to accept the command of the army of the church; and though advanced in life and despoiled of royalty, the sword and spirit of John of Brienne were still ready for the service of Christendom. In the seven years of his brother's reign, Baldwin of Courtenay had not emerged from a state of childhood, and the barons of Romania felt the strong necessity of placing the sceptre in the hands of a man and an hero. The veteran king of Jerusalem might have disdained

the name and office of regent; they agreed to invest him for his life with the title and prerogatives of emperor, on the sole condition, that Baldwin should marry his second daughter, and succeed at a mature age to the throne of Constantinople. The expectation, both of the Greeks and Latins, was kindled by the renown, the choice, and the presence of John of Brienne: and they admired his martial aspect, his green and vigorous age of more than fourscore years, and his size and stature, which surpassed the common measure of mankind⁴². But avarice, and the love of ease, appear to have chilled the ardour of enterprise: his troops were disbanded, and two years rolled away without action or honour, till he was awakened by the dangerous alliance of Vataces emperor of Nice, and of Azan king of Bulgaria. They besieged Constantinople by sea and land, with an army of one hundred thousand men, and a fleet of three hundred ships of war; while the entire force of the Latin emperor was reduced to one hundred and sixty knights, and a small addition of sergeants and archers. I tremble to relate, that instead of defending the city, the hero made a sally at the head of his cavalry; and that of forty-eight squadrons of the enemy, no more than three escaped from the edge of his invincible sword. Fired by his example, the infantry and the citizens boarded the vessels that anchored close to the walls; and twenty-five were dragged in triumph into the harbour of Constantinople.

CHAP. LXI. At the summons of the emperor, the vassals and allies armed in her defence; broke through every obstacle that opposed their passage; and, in the succeeding year, obtained a second victory over the same enemies. By the rude poets of the age, John of Brienne is compared to Hector, Roland, and Judas Machabæus ⁴³: but their credit, and his glory, receives some abatement from the silence of the Greeks. The empire was soon deprived of the last of her champions; and the dying monarch was ambitious to enter paradise in the habit of a Franciscan friar ⁴⁴.

Baldwin II.
A. D. 1237,
March 23—
A. D. 1261,
July 25.

In the double victory of John of Brienne, I cannot discover the name or exploits of his pupil Baldwin; who had attained the age of military service, and who succeeded to the Imperial dignity on the decease of his adoptive father ⁴⁵. The royal youth was employed on a commission more suitable to his temper; he was sent to visit the Western courts, of the pope more especially, and of the king of France; to excite their pity by the view of his innocence and distress; and to obtain some supplies of men or money, for the relief of the sinking empire. He thrice repeated these mendicant visits, in which he seemed to prolong his stay and postpone his return; of the five-and-twenty years of his reign, a greater number were spent abroad than at home; and in no place did the emperor deem himself less free and secure, than in his native country, and his capital. On some public occasions, his vanity might be soothed by the title of Augustus, and

by the honours of the purple; and at the general council of Lyons, when Frederic the second was excommunicated and deposed, his Oriental colleague was enthroned on the right-hand of the pope. But how often was the exile, the vagrant, the Imperial beggar, humbled with scorn, insulted with pity, and degraded in his own eyes and those of the nations? In his first visit to England, he was stopped at Dover, by a severe reprimand, that he should presume, without leave, to enter an independent kingdom. After some delay, Baldwin however was permitted to pursue his journey, was entertained with cold civility, and thankfully departed with a present of seven hundred marks ⁴⁶. From the avarice of Rome, he could only obtain the proclamation of a crusade and a treasure of indulgences; a coin, whose currency was depreciated by too frequent and indiscriminate abuse. His birth and misfortunes recommended him to the generosity of his cousin Louis the ninth; but the martial zeal of the saint was diverted from Constantinople to Egypt and Palestine; and the public and private poverty of Baldwin was alleviated, for a moment, by the alienation of the marquisate of Namur and the lordship of Courtenay, the last remains of his inheritance ⁴⁷. By such shameful or ruinous expedients, he once more returned to Romania, with an army of thirty thousand soldiers, whose numbers were doubled in the apprehension of the Greeks. His first dispatches to France and England announced his victories

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and his hopes: he had reduced the country round the capital to the distance of three days journey; and if he succeeded against an important, though nameless, city (most probably Chiorli), the frontier would be safe and the passage accessible. But these expectations (if Baldwin was sincere) quickly vanished like a dream; the troops and treasures of France melted away in his unskilful hands, and the throne of the Latin emperor was protected by a dishonourable alliance with the Turks and Comans. To secure the former, he consented to bestow his niece on the unbelieving sultan of Cogni: to please the latter, he complied with their Pagan rites; a dog was sacrificed between the two armies; and the contracting parties tasted each other's blood, as a pledge of their fidelity⁴⁸. In the palace or prison of Constantinople, the successor of Augustus demolished the vacant houses for winter-fuel, and stripped the lead from the churches for the daily expence of his family. Some usurious loans were dealt with a scanty hand by the merchants of Italy; and Philip, his son and heir, was pawned at Venice as the security for a debt⁴⁹. Thirst, hunger, and nakedness, are positive evils; but wealth is relative; and a prince, who would be rich in a private station, may be exposed by the encrease of his wants to all the anxiety and bitterness of poverty.

The holy
crown of
thorns.

But in this abject distress, the emperor and empire were still possessed of an ideal treasure, which drew its fantastic value from the supersti-

tion of the Christian world. The merit of the true cross was somewhat impaired by its frequent division; and a long captivity among the infidels might shed some suspicion on the fragments that were produced in the East and West. But another relic of the Passion was preserved in the Imperial chapel of Constantinople; and the crown of thorns which had been placed on the head of Christ was equally precious and authentic. It had formerly been the practice of the Egyptian debtors to deposit, as a security, the mummies of their parents; and both their honour and religion were bound for the redemption of the pledge. In the same manner, and in the absence of the emperor, the barons of Romania borrowed the sum of thirteen thousand one hundred and thirty-four pieces of gold ^o, on the credit of the holy crown: they failed in the performance of their contract; and a rich Venetian, Nicholas Querini, undertook to satisfy their impatient creditors, on condition that the relic should be lodged at Venice, to become his absolute property, if it were not redeemed within a short and definite term. The barons apprised their sovereign of the hard treaty and impending loss; and as the empire could not afford a ransom of seven thousand pounds sterling, Baldwin was anxious to snatch the prize from the Venetians, and to vest it with more honour and emolument in the hands of the most Christian king ^o. Yet the negociation was attended with some delicacy. In the purchase of relics, the saint would have started at the guilt

C H A P. of simony; but if the mode of expression were
 LXI. changed, he might lawfully repay the debt, accept the gift, and acknowledge the obligation. His ambassadors, two Dominicans, were dispatched to Venice, to redeem and receive the holy crown, which had escaped the dangers of the sea and the gallies of Vataces. On opening a wooden box, they recognised the seals of the doge and barons, which were applied on a shrine of silver: and within this shrine, the monument of the Passion was inclosed in a golden vase. The reluctant Venetians yielded to justice and power: the emperor Frederic granted a free and honourable passage; the court of France advanced as far as Troyes in Champagne, to meet with devotion this inestimable relic: it was borne in triumph through Paris by the king himself, barefoot, and in his shirt; and a free gift of ten thousand marks of silver reconciled Baldwin to his loss. The success of this transaction tempted the Latin emperor to offer with the same generosity the remaining furniture of his chapel⁵²; a large and authentic portion of the true cross; the baby-linen of the Son of God; the lance, the sponge, and the chain, of his Passion; the rod of Moses, and part of the skull of St. John the baptist. For the reception of these spiritual treasures, twenty thousand marks were expended by St. Louis on a stately foundation, the holy chapel of Paris, on which the muse of Boileau has bestowed a comic immortality. The truth of
 such

such remote and ancient relics, which cannot be proved by any human testimony, must be admitted by those who believe in the miracles which they have performed. About the middle of the last age, an inveterate ulcer was touched and cured by an holy prickle of the holy crown³: the prodigy is attested by the most pious and enlightened Christians of France; nor will the fact be easily disproved, except by those who are armed with a general antidote against religious credulity⁴.

The Latins of Constantinople⁵ were on all sides encompassed and pressed: their sole hope, the last delay of their ruin, was in the division of their Greek and Bulgarian enemies; and of this hope they were deprived by the superior arms and policy of Vataces emperor of Nice. From the Propontis to the rocky coast of Pamphilia, Asia was peaceful and prosperous under his reign: and the events of every campaign extended his influence in Europe. The strong cities of the hills of Macedonia and Thrace, were rescued from the Bulgarians; and their kingdom was circumscribed by its present and proper limits, along the southern banks of the Danube. The sole emperor of the Romans could no longer brook that a lord of Epirus, a Comnenian prince of the West, should presume to dispute or share the honours of the purple; and the humble Demetrius changed the colour of his buskins, and accepted with gratitude the appellation of despot.

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Progress of
the Greeks,
A. D.
1237 — 1261.



C H A P. LXI. His own subjects were exasperated by his baseness and incapacity: they implored the protection of their supreme lord. After some resistance, the kingdom of Thessalonica was united to the empire of Nice; and Vataces reigned without a competitor from the Turkish borders to the Adriatic gulf. The princes of Europe revered his merit and power; and had he subscribed an orthodox creed, it should seem that the pope would have abandoned without reluctance the Latin throne of Constantinople. But the death of Vataces, the short and busy reign of Theodore his son, and the helpless infancy of his grandson John, suspended the restoration of the Greeks. In the next chapter, I shall explain their domestic revolutions; in this place, it will be sufficient to observe, that the young prince was oppressed by the ambition of his guardian and colleague Michael Palæologus, who displayed the virtues and vices that belong to the founder of a new dynasty. The emperor Baldwin had flattered himself, that he might recover some provinces or cities by an impotent negociation. His ambassadors were dismissed from Nice with mockery and contempt. At every place which they named, Palæologus alleged some special reason, which rendered it dear and valuable in his eyes: in the one he was born; in another he had been first promoted to military command; and in a third he had enjoyed, and hoped long to enjoy, the pleasures of the chace. "And what then do you propose to give us?" said the astonished

Michael Palæologus, the Greek emperor,
 A. D. 1259,
 December 1.

deputies. "Nothing," replied the Greek, "not a
 "foot of land. If your master be desirous of
 "peace, let him pay me as an annual tribute,
 "the sum which he receives from the trade and
 "customs of Constantinople. On these terms,
 "I may allow him to reign. If he refuses, it is
 "war. I am not ignorant of the art of war, and
 "I trust the event to God and my sword."

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An expedition against the despot of Epirus was the first prelude of his arms. If a victory was followed by a defeat; if the race of the Comneni or Angeli survived in those mountains his efforts and his reign; the captivity of Villehardouin, prince of Achaia, deprived the Latins of the most active and powerful vassal of their expiring monarchy. The republics of Venice and Genoa disputed, in the first of their naval wars, the command of the sea and the commerce of the East. Pride and interest attached the Venetians to the defence of Constantinople: their rivals were tempted to promote the designs of her enemies, and the alliance of the Genoese with the schismatic conqueror provoked the indignation of the Latin church."

Intent on his great object, the emperor Michael visited in person and strengthened the troops and fortifications of Thrace. The remains of the Latins were driven from their last possessions: he assaulted without success the suburb of Galata; and corresponded with a perfidious baron, who proved unwilling, or unable, to open the gates of the metropolis. The next spring, his favourite

Constantinople recovered by the Greeks,
 A. D. 1261,
 July 25.

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general, Alexius Strategopulus, whom he had decorated with the title of Cæsar, passed the Hellespont with eight hundred horse and some infantry⁵⁸, on a secret expedition. His instructions enjoined him to approach, to listen, to watch, but not to risk any doubtful or dangerous enterprise against the city. The adjacent territory, between the Propontis and the Black Sea, was cultivated by an hardy race of peasants and outlaws, exercised in arms, uncertain in their allegiance, but inclined by language, religion, and present advantage, to the party of the Greeks. They were styled the *volunteers*⁵⁹, and by their free service, the army of Alexius, with the regulars of Thrace and the Coman auxiliaries⁶⁰, was augmented to the number of five-and-twenty thousand men. By the ardour of the volunteers, and by his own ambition, the Cæsar was stimulated to disobey the precise orders of his master, in the just confidence that success would plead his pardon and reward. The weakness of Constantinople, and the distress and terror of the Latins, were familiar to the observation of the volunteers: and they represented the present moment as the most propitious to surprise and conquest. A rash youth, the new governor of the Venetian colony, had sailed away with thirty gallies and the best of the French knights, on a wild expedition to Daphnusia, a town on the Black Sea, at the distance of forty leagues; and the remaining Latins were without strength or suspicion. They were informed that Alexius had

passed the Hellespont: but their apprehensions were lulled by the smallness of his original numbers; and their imprudence had not watched the subsequent encrease of his army. If he left his main body to second and support his operations, he might advance unperceived in the night with a chosen detachment. While some applied scaling-ladders to the lowest part of the walls, they were secure of an old Greek, who would introduce their companions through a subterraneous passage into his house; they could soon on the inside break an entrance through the golden gate, which had been long obstructed; and the conqueror would be in the heart of the city, before the Latins were conscious of their danger. After some debate, the Cæsar resigned himself to the faith of the volunteers; they were trusty, bold, and successful; and in describing the plan, I have already related the execution and success⁶¹. But no sooner had Alexius passed the threshold of the golden gate, than he trembled at his own rashness: he paused, he deliberated; till the desperate volunteers urged him forwards, by the assurance that in retreat lay the greatest and most inevitable danger. Whilst the Cæsar kept his regulars in firm array, the Comans dispersed themselves on all sides; an alarm was sounded, and the threats of fire and pillage compelled the citizens to a decisive resolution. The Greeks of Constantinople remembered their native sovereigns; the Genoese merchants their recent alliance and Venetian foes; every quarter was in arms; and the

C H A P. LXI. air resounded with a general acclamation of
 “ Long life and victory to Michael and John,
 “ the august emperors of the Romans ! ” Their
 rival, Baldwin, was awakened by the sound;
 but the most pressing danger could not prompt
 him to draw his sword in the defence of a city
 which he deserted, perhaps, with more pleasure
 than regret: he fled from the palace to the sea-
 shore, where he descried the welcome sails of the
 fleet returning from the vain and fruitless attempt
 on Daphnusia. Constantinople was irrecoverably
 lost; but the Latin emperor and the principal fa-
 milies embarked on board the Venetian galleys,
 and steered for the isle of Eubœa, and after-
 wards for Italy, where the royal fugitive was en-
 tertained by the pope and Sicilian king with a
 mixture of contempt and pity. From the loss
 of Constantinople to his death, he consumed
 thirteen years, soliciting the Catholic powers to
 join in his restoration; the lesson had been fami-
 liar to his youth; nor was his last exile more in-
 digent or shameful than his three former pil-
 grimages to the courts of Europe. His son Philip
 was the heir of an ideal empire; and the preten-
 sions of *his* daughter Catherine were transported
 by her marriage to Charles of Valois, the bro-
 ther of Philip the Fair, king of France. The
 house of Courtenay was represented in the female
 line by successive alliances, till the title of em-
 peror of Constantinople, too bulky and sonorous
 for a private name, modestly expired in silence
 and oblivion.”

After this narrative of the expeditions of the
 Latins to Palestine and Constantinople, I cannot
 dismiss the subject without revolving the general
 consequences on the countries that were the scene,
 and on the nations that were the actors, of these
 memorable crusades⁶³. As soon as the arms of
 the Franks were withdrawn, the impression,
 though not the memory, was erased in the
 Mahometan realms of Egypt and Syria. The faith-
 ful disciples of the prophet were never tempted
 by a prophane desire to study the laws or lan-
 guage of the idolaters; nor did the simplicity of
 their primitive manners receive the slightest al-
 teration from their intercourse in peace and war
 with the unknown strangers of the West. The
 Greeks, who thought themselves proud, but
 who were only vain, shewed a disposition some-
 what less inflexible. In the efforts for the re-
 covery of their empire, they emulated the valour,
 discipline, and tactics, of their antagonists. The
 modern literature of the West they might justly
 despise; but its free spirit would instruct them in
 the rights of man: and some institutions of public
 and private life were adopted from the French.
 The correspondence of Constantinople and Italy
 diffused the knowledge of the Latin tongue; and
 several of the fathers and classics were at length
 honoured with a Greek version⁶⁴. But the
 national and religious prejudices of the Orientals
 were inflamed by persecution; and the reign of
 the Latins confirmed the separation of the two
 churches.

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General con-
sequences of
the crusades.

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If we compare, at the æra of the crusades, the Latins of Europe with the Greeks and Arabians, their respective degrees of knowledge, industry, and art, our rude ancestors must be content with the third rank in the scale of nations. Their successive improvement and present superiority may be ascribed to a peculiar energy of character, to an active and imitative spirit, unknown to their more polished rivals, who at that time were in a stationary or retrograde state. With such a disposition, the Latins should have derived the most early and essential benefits from a series of events which opened to their eyes the prospect of the world, and introduced them to a long and frequent intercourse with the more cultivated regions of the East. The first and most obvious progress was in trade and manufactures, in the arts which are strongly prompted by the thirst of wealth, the calls of necessity, and the gratification of the sense or vanity. Among the crowd of unthinking fanatics, a captive or a pilgrim might sometimes observe the superior refinements of Cairo and Constantinople: the first importer of wind-mills⁶ was the benefactor of nations; and if such blessings are enjoyed without any grateful remembrance, history has condescended to notice the more apparent luxuries of silk and sugar, which were transported into Italy from Greece and Egypt. But the intellectual wants of the Latins were more slowly felt and supplied; the ardour of studious curiosity was awakened in Europe by different causes and more recent events;

and, in the age of the crusades, they viewed with careless indifference the literature of the Greeks and Arabians. Some rudiments of mathematical and medicinal knowledge might be imparted in practice and in figures; necessity might produce some interpreters for the grosser business of merchants and soldiers; but the commerce of the Orientals had not diffused the study and knowledge of their languages in the schools of Europe⁶⁶. If a similar principle of religion repulsed the idiom of the Koran, it should have excited their patience and curiosity to understand the original text of the Gospel; and the same grammar would have unfolded the sense of Plato and the beauties of Homer. Yet in a reign of sixty years the Latins of Constantinople disdained the speech and learning of their subjects; and the manuscripts were the only treasures which the natives might enjoy without rapine or envy. Aristotle was indeed the oracle of the Western universities; but it was a barbarous Aristotle; and, instead of ascending to the fountain-head, his Latin votaries humbly accepted a corrupt and remote version from the Jews and Moors of Andalusia. The principle of the crusades was a savage fanaticism; and the most important effects were analogous to the cause. Each pilgrim was ambitious to return with his sacred spoils, the relics of Greece and Palestine⁶⁷; and each relic was preceded and followed by a train of miracles and visions. The belief of the Catholics was corrupted by new legends, their practice by new

CHAPTER. superstitions; and the establishment of the inquisition, the mendicant orders of monks and friars, the last abuse of indulgences, and the final progress of idolatry, flowed from the baleful fountain of the holy war. The active spirit of the Latins preyed on the vitals of their reason and religion; and if the ninth and tenth centuries were the times of darkness, the thirteenth and fourteenth were the age of absurdity and fable.

In the profession of Christianity, in the cultivation of a fertile land, the northern conquerors of the Roman empire insensibly mingled with the provincials, and rekindled the embers of the arts of antiquity. Their settlements about the age of Charlemagne had acquired some degree of order and stability, when they were overwhelmed by new swarms of invaders, the Normans, Saracens⁶⁸, and Hungarians, who replunged the western countries of Europe into their former state of anarchy and barbarism. About the eleventh century, the second tempest had subsided by the expulsion or conversion of the enemies of Christendom: the tide of civilization, which had so long ebbcd, began to flow with a steady and accelerated course, and a fairer prospect was opened to the hopes and efforts of the rising generations. Great was the increase, and rapid the progress, during the two hundred years of the crusades; and some philosophers have applauded the propitious influence of these holy wars, which appear to me to have checked rather than forwarded the maturity of Europe⁶⁹. The

lives and labours of millions, which were buried in the East, would have been more profitably employed in the improvement of their native country: the accumulated stock of industry and wealth would have overflowed in navigation and trade; and the Latins would have been enriched and enlightened by a pure and friendly correspondence with the climates of the East. In one respect I can indeed perceive the accidental operation of the crusades, not so much in producing a benefit as in removing an evil. The larger portion of the inhabitants of Europe was chained to the soil, without freedom, or property, or knowledge; and the two orders of ecclesiastics and nobles, whose numbers were comparatively small, alone deserved the name of citizens and men. This oppressive system was supported by the arts of the clergy and the swords of the barons. The authority of the priests operated in the darker ages as a salutary antidote: they prevented the total extinction of letters, mitigated the fierceness of the times, sheltered the poor and defenceless, and preserved or revived the peace and order of civil society. But the independence, rapine, and discord, of the feudal lords were unmixed with any semblance of good; and every hope of industry and improvement was crushed by the iron weight of the martial aristocracy. Among the causes that undermined that Gothic edifice, a conspicuous place must be allowed to the crusades. The estates of the barons were dissipated, and their race was often

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extinguished, in these costly and perilous expeditions. Their poverty extorted from their pride those charters of freedom which unlocked the fetters of the slave, secured the farm of the peasant and the shop of the artificer, and gradually restored a substance and a soul to the most numerous and useful part of the community. The conflagration which destroyed the tall and barren trees of the forest gave air and scope to the vegetation of the smaller and nutritive plants of the soil.

Digression on the Family of Courtenay.

THE purple of three emperors, who have reigned at Constantinople, will authorise or excuse a digression on the origin and singular fortunes of the house of COURTENAY⁷⁰, in the three principal branches, I. Of Edessa; II. Of France; and, III. Of England, of which the last only has survived the revolutions of eight hundred years.

Origin of
the family of
Courtenay,
A. D. 1020.

I. Before the introduction of trade, which scatters riches, and of knowledge, which dispels prejudice, the prerogative of birth is most strongly felt and most humbly acknowledged. In every age, the laws and manners of the Germans have discriminated the ranks of society: the dukes and counts, who shared the empire of Charlemagne, converted their office to an inheritance; and to his children, each feudal lord bequeathed

his honour and his sword. The proudest families are content to lose in the darkness of the middle ages, the tree of their pedigree, which, however deep and lofty, must ultimately rise from a plebeian root; and their historians must descend ten centuries below the Christian æra, before they can ascertain any lineal succession by the evidence of surnames, of arms, and of authentic records. With the first rays of light⁷¹, we discern the nobility and opulence of Atho, a French knight: his nobility, in the rank and title of a nameless father; his opulence, in the foundation of the castle of Courtenay in the district of Gatinois, about fifty-six miles to the south of Paris. From the reign of Robert, the son of Hugh Capet, the barons of Courtenay are conspicuous among the immediate vassals of the crown; and Joscelin, the grandson of Atho and a noble dame, is enrolled among the heroes of the first crusade. A domestic alliance (their mothers were sisters) attached him to the standard of Baldwin of Bruges, the second count of Edessa: a princely fief, which he was worthy to receive, and able to maintain, announces the number of his martial followers: and after the departure of his cousin, Joscelin himself was invested with the county of Edessa on both sides of the Euphrates. By the œconomy in peace, his territories were replenished with Latin and Syrian subjects; his magazines with corn, wine, and oil; his castles with gold and silver, with arms and horses. In a holy warfare of thirty years, he was alternately a conqueror

I. The counts
of Edessa,
A. D.
1101—1152.

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and a captive; but he died like a foldier, in an horfe-litter at the head of his troops; and his laft glance beheld the flight of the Turkish invaders who had prefumed on his age and infirmities. His fon and fucceffor, of the fame name, was lefs deficient in valour than in vigilance; but he fometimes forgot that dominion is acquired and maintained by the fame arts. He challenged the hoftility of the Turks, without fecuring the friendship of the prince of Antioch; and, amidft the peaceful luxury of Turbessel, in Syria⁷², Jofcelin neglected the defence of the Christian frontier beyond the Euphrates. In his abfence, Zenghi, the firft of the Atabeks, befieged and ftormed his capital, Edeffa, which was feebly defended by a timorous and difloyal crowd of Orientals: the Franks were oppreffed in a bold attempt for its recovery, and Courtenay ended his days in the prifon of Aleppo. He ftill left a fair and ample patrimony. But the victorious Turks oppreffed on all fides the weaknefs of a widow and orphan; and, for the equivalent of an annual penfion, they refigned to the Greek emperor the charge of defending, and the fhame of lofing, the laft relics of the Latin conquest. The countefs-dowager of Edeffa retired to Jerufalem with her two children: the daughter, Agnes, became the wife and mother of a king; the fon, Jofcelin the third, accepted the office of fenefchal, the firft of the kingdom, and held his new eftates in Palestine by the fervice of fifty knights. His name appears with honour in all

the transactions of peace and war; but he finally vanishes in the fall of Jerusalem; and the name of Courtenay, in this branch of Edessa, was lost by the marriage of his two daughters with a French and a German baron⁷³.

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II. While Joscelin reigned beyond the Euphrates, his elder brother Milo, the son of Joscelin, the son of Atho, continued, near the Seine, to possess the castle of their fathers, which was at length inherited by Rainaud, or Reginald, the youngest of his three sons. Examples of genius or virtue must be rare in the annals of the oldest families; and, in a remote age, their pride will embrace a deed of rapine and violence; such, however, as could not be perpetrated without some superiority of courage, or, at least, of power. A descendant of Reginald of Courtenay may blush for the public robber, who stripped and imprisoned several merchants, after they had satisfied the king's duties, at Sens and Orleans. He will glory in the offence, since the bold offender could not be compelled to obedience and restitution till the regent and the count of Champagne prepared to march against him at the head of an army⁷⁴. Reginald bestowed his estates on his eldest daughter, and his daughter on the seventh son of king Louis the Fat; and their marriage was crowned with a numerous offspring. We might expect that a private should have emerged in a royal name, and that the descendants of Peter of France and Elizabeth of Courtenay would have enjoyed the title and honours of princes of the blood. But

II. The
Courtenays
of France.

Their alliance with the
royal family,
A. D. 1150.

C H A P.

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this legitimate claim was long neglected and finally denied; and the causes of their disgrace will represent the story of this second branch. 1. Of all the families now extant, the most ancient, doubtless, and the most illustrious, is the house of France, which has occupied the same throne above eight hundred years, and descends, in a clear and lineal series of males, from the middle of the ninth century⁷⁵. In the age of the crusades, it was already revered both in the East and West. But from Hugh Capet to the marriage of Peter, no more than five reigns or generations had elapsed; and so precarious was their title, that the eldest sons, as a necessary precaution, were previously crowned during the lifetime of their fathers. The peers of France have long maintained their precedence before the younger branches of the royal line; nor had the princes of the blood, in the twelfth century, acquired that hereditary lustre which is now diffused over the most remote candidates for the succession. 2. The barons of Courtenay must have stood high in their own estimation, and in that of the world, since they could impose on the son of a king the obligation of adopting for himself and all his descendants the name and arms of their daughter and his wife. In the marriage of an heiress with her inferior or her equal, such exchange was often required and allowed: but as they continued to diverge from the regal stem, the sons of Louis the Fat were insensibly confounded with their maternal ancestors; and the
new

new Courtenays might deserve to forfeit the honours of their birth, which a motive of interest had tempted them to renounce. 3. The shame was far more permanent than the reward, and a momentary blaze was followed by a long darkness. The eldest son of these nuptials, Peter of Courtenay, had married, as I have already mentioned, the sister of the counts of Flanders, the two first emperors of Constantinople: he rashly accepted the invitation of the barons of Romania; his two sons, Robert and Baldwin, successively held and lost the remains of the Latin empire in the East, and the granddaughter of Baldwin the second again mingled her blood with the blood of France and of Valois. To support the expences of a troubled and transitory reign, their patrimonial estates were mortgaged or sold; and the last emperors of Constantinople depended on the annual charity of Rome and Naples.

While the elder brothers dissipated their wealth in romantic adventures, and the castle of Courtenay was profaned by a plebeian owner, the younger branches of that adopted name were propagated and multiplied. But their splendour was clouded by poverty and time: after the decease of Robert, great butler of France, they descended from princes to barons; the next generations were confounded with the simple gentry; the descendants of Hugh Capet could no longer be visible in the rural lords of Tanlay and of Champignelles. The more adventurous embraced

C H A P. without dishonour the profession of a soldier:
 LXI. the least active and opulent might sink, like their
 cousins of the branch of Dreux, into the condi-
 tion of peasants. Their royal descent, in a dark
 period of four hundred years, became each day
 more obsolete and ambiguous: and their pedigree,
 instead of being enrolled in the annals of the
 kingdom, must be painfully searched by the
 minute diligence of heralds and genealogists. It
 was not till the end of the sixteenth century on
 the accession of a family, almost as remote as
 their own, that the princely spirit of the Cour-
 tenays again revived; and the question of the
 nobility, provoked them to assert the royalty,
 of their blood. They appealed to the justice
 and compassion of Henry the fourth; obtained
 a favourable opinion from twenty lawyers of Italy
 and Germany, and modestly compared them-
 selves to the descendants of king David, whose
 prerogatives were not impaired by the lapse of
 ages or the trade of a carpenter⁷⁶. But every ear
 was deaf, and every circumstance was adverse,
 to their lawful claims. The Bourbon kings were
 justified by the neglect of the Valois: the prin-
 ces of the blood more recent and lofty, disdained
 the alliance of this humble kindred: the parliament,
 without denying their proofs, eluded a dangerous
 precedent by an arbitrary distinction, and establish-
 ed St. Louis as the first father of the royal line⁷⁷.
 A repetition of complaints and protests was repeat-
 edly disregarded: and the hopeless pursuit was

terminated in the present century by the death of the last male of the family ⁷⁸. Their painful and anxious situation was alleviated by the pride of conscious virtue: they sternly rejected the temptations of fortune and favour; and a dying Courtenay would have sacrificed his son, if the youth could have renounced, for any temporal interest, the right and title of a legitimate prince of the blood of France ⁷⁹.

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III. According to the old register of Ford Abbey, the Courtenays of Devonshire are descended from prince *Florus*, the second son of Peter, and the grandson of Louis the Fat ⁸⁰. This fable of the grateful or venal monks was too respectfully entertained by our antiquaries, Cambden ⁸¹ and Dugdale ⁸²; but it is so clearly repugnant to truth and time, that the rational pride of the family now refuses to accept this imaginary founder. Their most faithful historians believe, that after giving his daughter to the king's son, Reginald of Courtenay abandoned his possessions in France, and obtained from the English monarch a second wife and a new inheritance. It is certain, at least, that Henry the second distinguished in his camps and councils, a Reginald, of the name and arms, and, as it may be fairly presumed, of the genuine race, of the Courtenays of France. The right of wardship enabled a feudal lord to reward his vassal with the marriage and estate of a noble heiress; and Reginald of Courtenay acquired a fair establishment in Devonshire, where his posterity has been seated above six hundred

III. The
Courtenays
of England.

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years⁸³. From a Norman baron, Baldwin de Brioniis, who had been invested by the Conqueror, Hawise, the wife of Reginald, derived the honour of Okehampton, which was held by the service of ninety-three knights; and a female might claim the manly offices of hereditary viscount or sheriff, and of captain of the royal castle of Exeter. Their son Robert married the sister of the earl of Devon; at the end of a century, on the failure of the family of Rivers⁸⁴, his great-grandson, Hugh the second, succeeded, to a title which was still considered as a territorial dignity; and

The earls of
Devonshire. twelve earls of Devonshire, of the name of Courtenay, have flourished in a period of two hundred and twenty years. They were ranked among the chief of the barons of the realm; nor was it till after a strenuous dispute, that they yielded to the fief of Arundel, the first place in the parliament of England: their alliances were contracted with the noblest families, the Veres, Despenfers, St. Johns, Talbots, Bohuns, and even the Plantagenets themselves; and in a contest with John of Lancaster, a Courtenay, bishop of London, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, might be accused of profane confidence in the strength and number of his kindred. In peace, the earls of Devon resided in their numerous castles and manors of the west: their ample revenue was appropriated to devotion and hospitality; and the epitaph of Edward, surnamed, from his misfortune, the *blind*, from his virtues, the *good*, earl, inculcates with much ingenuity a moral

sentence, which may however be abused by thoughtless generosity. After a grateful commemoration of the fifty-five years of union and happiness, which he enjoyed with Mabel his wife, the good earl thus speaks from the tomb:

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What we gave, we have;

What we spent, we had;

What we left, we lost⁸⁵.

But their *losses*, in this sense, were far superior to their gifts and expences; and their heirs, not less than the poor, were the objects of their paternal care. The sums which they paid for livery and seisin, attest the greatness of their possessions; and several estates have remained in their family since the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In war, the Courtenays of England fulfilled the duties, and deserved the honours, of chivalry. They were often entrusted to levy and command the militia of Devonshire and Cornwall; they often attended their supreme lord to the borders of Scotland; and in foreign service, for a stipulated price, they sometimes maintained fourscore men at arms and as many archers. By sea and land they fought under the standard of the Edwards and Henries: their names are conspicuous in battles, in tournaments, and in the original list of the order of the garter; three brothers shared the Spanish victory of the Black Prince; and in the lapse of six generations, the English Courtenays had learned to despise the nation and country from which they derived

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their origin. In the quarrel of the two roses, the earls of Devon adhered to the house of Lancaster, and three brothers successively died, either in the field or on the scaffold. Their honours and estates were restored by Henry the seventh; a daughter of Edward the fourth was not disgraced by the nuptials of a Courtenay; their son, who was created marquis of Exeter, enjoyed the favour of his cousin Henry the eighth; and in the camp of Cloth of Gold, he broke a lance against the French monarch. But the favour of Henry was the prelude of disgrace; his disgrace was the signal of death; and of the victims of the jealous tyrant, the marquis of Exeter is one of the most noble and guiltless. His son Edward lived a prisoner in the Tower, and died an exile at Padua; and the secret love of queen Mary, whom he slighted, perhaps for the princess Elizabeth, has shed a romantic colour on the story of this beautiful youth. The relics of his patrimony were conveyed into strange families by the marriages of his four aunts; and his personal honours, as if they had been legally extinct, were revived by the patents of succeeding princes. But there still survived a lineal descendant of Hugh the first earl of Devon, a younger branch of the Courtenays, who have been seated at Powderham castle above four hundred years from the reign of Edward the third to the present hour. Their estates have been encreased by the grant and improvement of lands in Ireland, and they have been recently restored to the honours of the peerage. Yet the

Courtenays still retain the plaintive motto, which asserts the innocence, and deplores the fall, of their ancient house ". While they sigh for past greatness, they are doubtless sensible of present blessings: in the long series of the Courtenay annals, the most splendid æra is likewise the most unfortunate; nor can an opulent peer of Britain be inclined to envy the emperors of Constantinople, who wandered over Europe to solicit alms for the support of their dignity and the defence of their capital.

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The Greek Emperors of Nice and Constantinople. — Elevation and Reign of Michael Palæologus. — His false Union with the Pope and the Latin Church. — Hostile Designs of Charles of Anjou. — Revolt of Sicily. — War of the Catalans in Asia and Greece. — Revolutions and present State of Athens.

CHAP.

LXII.

Restoration
of the Greek
empire.

Theodore
Lascaris,
A. D.

1204 — 1222.

THE loss of Constantinople restored a momentary vigour to the Greeks. From their palaces, the princes and nobles were driven into the field; and the fragments of the falling monarchy were grasped by the hands of the most vigorous or the most skilful candidates. In the long and barren pages of the Byzantine annals¹, it would not be an easy task to equal the two characters of Theodore Lascaris and John Ducas Vataces², who replanted and upheld the Roman standard at Nice in Bithynia. The difference of their virtues was happily suited to the diversity of their situation. In his first efforts the fugitive Lascaris commanded only three cities and two thousand soldiers: his reign was the season of generous and active despair: in every military operation he

staked his life and crown; and his enemies, of
 the Hellespont and the Mæander, were surprised
 by his celerity and subdued by his boldness. A
 victorious reign of eighteen years expanded the
 principality of Nice to the magnitude of an em-
 pire. The throne of his successor and son-in-law
 Vataces was founded on a more solid basis, a
 larger scope, and more plentiful resources; and
 it was the temper, as well as the interest, of Va-
 taces to calculate the risk, to expect the moment,
 and to ensure the success, of his ambitious designs.
 In the decline of the Latins, I have briefly exposed
 the progress of the Greeks; the prudent and gra-
 dual advances of a conqueror, who, in a reign
 of thirty-three years, rescued the provinces from
 national and foreign usurpers, till he pressed on
 all sides the Imperial city, a leafless and sapless
 trunk which must fall at the first stroke of the
 axe. But his interior and peaceful administration
 is still more deserving of notice and praise³. The
 calamities of the times had wasted the numbers
 and the substance of the Greeks: the motives
 and the means of agriculture were extirpated;
 and the most fertile lands were left without cul-
 tivation or inhabitants. A portion of this vacant
 property was occupied and improved by the
 command, and for the benefit, of the emperor:
 a powerful hand and a vigilant eye supplied and
 surpassed, by a skilful management, the minute
 diligence of a private farmer: the royal domain
 became the garden and granary of Asia; and
 without impoverishing the people, the sovereign

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John Ducas

Vataces.

A. D.

1222—1255,

October 30.

CHAP. LXII. acquired a fund of innocent and productive wealth. According to the nature of the soil, his lands were sown with corn or planted with vines: the pastures were filled with horses and oxen, with sheep and hogs; and when Vataces presented to the empress a crown of diamonds and pearls, he informed her with a smile that this precious ornament arose from the sale of the eggs of his innumerable poultry. The produce of his domain was applied to the maintenance of his palace and hospitals, the calls of dignity and benevolence: the lesson was still more useful than the revenue: the plough was restored to its ancient security and honour; and the nobles were taught to seek a sure and independent revenue from their estates, instead of adorning their splendid beggary by the oppression of the people, or (what is almost the same) by the favours of the court. The superfluous stock of corn and cattle was eagerly purchased by the Turks, with whom Vataces preserved a strict and sincere alliance; but he discouraged the importation of foreign manufactures, the costly silks of the East, and the curious labours of the Italian looms. "The demands of nature and necessity," was he accustomed to say, "are indispensable; but the influence of fashion may rise and sink at the breath of a monarch;" and both his precept and example recommended simplicity of manners and the use of domestic industry. The education of youth and the revival of learning were the most serious objects of his care; and, without deciding the

precedency, he pronounced with truth, that a prince and a philosopher are the two most eminent characters of human society. His first wife was Irene, the daughter of Theodore Lascaris, a woman more illustrious by her personal merit, the milder virtues of her sex, than by the blood of the Angeli and Comneni, that flowed in her veins, and transmitted the inheritance of the empire. After her death he was contracted to Anne or Constance, a natural daughter of the emperor Frederic the second; but as the bride had not attained the years of puberty, Vataces placed in his solitary bed an Italian damsel of her train; and his amorous weakness bestowed on the concubine the honours, though not the title, of lawful empress. His frailty was censured as a flagitious and damnable sin by the monks; and their rude invectives exercised and displayed the patience of the royal lover. A philosophic age may excuse a single vice, which was redeemed by a crowd of virtues; and in the review of his faults, and the more intemperate passions of Lascaris, the judgment of their contemporaries was softened by gratitude to the second founders of the empire. The slaves of the Latins, without law or peace, applauded the happiness of their brethren who had resumed their national freedom; and Vataces employed the laudable policy of convincing the Greeks of every dominion that it was their interest to be enrolled in the number of his subjects.

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Theodore
Lascaris II.

A. D. 1255,

October 30 —

A. D. 1259,

August,

A strong shade of degeneracy is visible between John Vataces and his son Theodore; between the founder who sustained the weight, and the heir who enjoyed the splendour, of the Imperial crown. Yet the character of Theodore was not devoid of energy; he had been educated in the school of his father, in the exercise of war and hunting: Constantinople was yet spared; but in the three years of a short reign, he thrice led his armies into the heart of Bulgaria. His virtues were sullied by a choleric and suspicious temper: the first of these may be ascribed to the ignorance of controul; and the second might naturally arise from a dark and imperfect view of the corruption of mankind. On the march in Bulgaria, he consulted on a question of policy his principal ministers; and the Greek logothete, George Acropolita, presumed to offend him by the declaration of a free and honest opinion. The emperor half-unsheathed his scymetar; but his more deliberate rage reserved Acropolita for a baser punishment. One of the first officers of the empire was ordered to dismount, stripped of his robes, and extended on the ground in the presence of the prince and army. In this posture he was chastised with so many and such heavy blows from the clubs of two guards or executioners, that when Theodore commanded them to cease, the great logothete was scarcely able to arise and crawl away to his tent. After a seclusion of some days, he was recalled by a peremptory mandate to his seat in council; and so dead

were the Greeks to the sense of honour and shame, that it is from the narrative of the sufferer himself that we acquire the knowledge of his disgrace⁷. The cruelty of the emperor was exasperated by the pangs of sickness, the approach of a premature end, and the suspicion of poison and magic. The lives and fortunes, the eyes and limbs, of his kinsmen and nobles, were sacrificed to each folly of passion; and before he died, the son of Vataces might deserve from the people, or at least from the court, the appellation of tyrant. A matron of the family of the Palæologi had provoked his anger by refusing to bestow her beauteous daughter on the vile plebeian who was recommended by his caprice. Without regard to her birth or age, her body, as high as the neck, was inclosed in a sack with several cats, who were pricked with pins to irritate their fury against their unfortunate fellow-captive. In his last hours, the emperor testified a wish to forgive and be forgiven, a just anxiety for the fate of John his son and successor, who, at the age of eight years, was condemned to the dangers of a long minority. His last choice entrusted the office of guardian to the sanctity of the patriarch Arsenius, and to the courage of George Muzalon, the great domestic, who was equally distinguished by the royal favour and the public hatred. Since their connection with the Latins, the names and privileges of hereditary rank had insinuated themselves into the Greek monarchy; and the noble families⁸ were provoked by the

Minority of
John Lasca-
ris,
A. D. 1259.
August.

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elevation of a worthless favourite, to whose influence they imputed the errors and calamities of the late reign. In the first council, after the emperor's death, Muzalon, from a lofty throne, pronounced a laboured apology of his conduct and intentions: his modesty was subdued by an unanimous assurance of esteem and fidelity; and his most inveterate enemies were the loudest to salute him as the guardian and saviour of the Romans. Eight days were sufficient to prepare the execution of the conspiracy. On the ninth, the obsequies of the deceased monarch were solemnised in the cathedral of Magnesia⁹, an Asiatic city, where he expired, on the banks of the Hermus and at the foot of mount Sipylus. The holy rites were interrupted by a sedition of the guards: Muzalon, his brothers, and his adherents, were massacred at the foot of the altar; and the absent patriarch was associated with a new colleague, with Michael Palæologus, the most illustrious, in birth and merit, of the Greek nobles¹⁰.

Family and
character of
Michael Palæologus.

Of those who are proud of their ancestors, the far greater part must be content with local or domestic renown; and few there are who dare trust the memorials of their family to the public annals of their country. As early as the middle of the eleventh century, the noble race of the Palæologi¹¹ stands high and conspicuous in the Byzantine history: it was the valiant George Palæologus who placed the father of the Comneni on the throne; and his kinsmen or descendants

continue, in each generation, to lead the armies and councils of the state. The purple was not dishonoured by their alliance; and had the law of succession, and female succession, been strictly observed, the wife of Theodore Lascaris must have yielded to her elder sister, the mother of Michael Palæologus, who afterwards raised his family to the throne. In his person, the splendour of birth was dignified by the merit of the soldier and statesman: in his early youth he was promoted to the office of *constable* or commander of the French mercenaries; the private expence of a day never exceeded three pieces of gold; but his ambition was rapacious and profuse; and his gifts were doubled by the graces of his conversation and manners. The love of the soldiers and people excited the jealousy of the court; and Michael thrice escaped from the dangers in which he was involved by his own imprudence or that of his friends. I. Under the reign of Justice and Vataces, a dispute arose¹² between two officers, one of whom accused the other of maintaining the hereditary right of the Palæologi. The cause was decided, according to the new jurisprudence of the Latins, by single combat: the defendant was overthrown; but he persisted in declaring that himself alone was guilty; and that he had uttered these rash or treasonable speeches without the approbation or knowledge of his patron. Yet a cloud of suspicion hung over the innocence of the constable: he was still pursued by the whispers of malevolence; and a subtle courtier, the

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archbishop of Philadelphia, urged him to accept the judgment of God in the fiery proof of the ordeal¹³. Three days before the trial, the patient's arm was enclosed in a bag, and secured by the royal signet; and it was incumbent on him to bear a red-hot ball of iron three times from the altar to the rails of the sanctuary, without artifice and without injury. Palæologus eluded the dangerous experiment with sense and pleasantry. "I am a soldier," said he, "and will boldly enter the lists with my accusers: but a layman, a sinner like myself, is not endowed with the gift of miracles. *Your* piety, most holy prelate, may deserve the interposition of heaven, and from your hands I will receive the fiery globe, the pledge of my innocence." The archbishop started; the emperor smiled; and the absolution or pardon of Michael was approved by new rewards and new services. II. In the succeeding reign, as he held the government of Nice, he was secretly informed, that the mind of the absent prince was poisoned with jealousy; and that death, or blindness, would be his final reward. Instead of awaiting the return and sentence of Theodore, the constable, with some followers, escaped from the city and the empire; and though he was plundered by the Turkmen of the desert, he found an hospitable refuge in the court of the sultan. In the ambiguous state of an exile, Michael reconciled the duties of gratitude and loyalty: drawing his sword against the Tartars; admonishing the garrisons of the Roman limit;

limit; and promoting by his influence, the restoration of peace, in which his pardon and recall were honourably included. III. While he guarded the West against the despot of Epirus, Michael was again suspected and condemned in the palace; and such was his loyalty or weakness, that he submitted to be led in chains above six hundred miles from Durazzo to Nice. The civility of the messenger alleviated his disgrace; the emperor's sickness dispelled his danger; and the last breath of Theodore, which recommended his infant son, at once acknowledged the innocence and the power of Palæologus.

But his innocence had been too unworthily treated, and his power was too strongly felt, to curb an aspiring subject in the fair field that was opened to his ambition. In the council after the death of Theodore, he was the first to pronounce, and the first to violate, the oath of allegiance to Muzalon; and so dextrous was his conduct, that he reaped the benefit, without incurring the guilt, or at least the reproach, of the subsequent massacre. In the choice of a regent, he balanced the interests and passions of the candidates; turned their envy and hatred from himself against each other, and forced every competitor to own, that after his own claims, those of Palæologus were best entitled to the preference. Under the title of great duke, he accepted or assumed, during a long minority, the active powers of government; the patriarch was a venerable name; and the factious nobles were

His elevation
to the throne

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seduced, or oppressed, by the ascendant of his genius. The fruits of the œconomy of Vataces were deposited in a strong castle on the banks of the Hermus, in the custody of the faithful Varangians: the constable retained his command or influence over the foreign troops; he employed the guards to possess the treasure, and the treasure to corrupt the guards; and whatsoever might be the abuse of the public money, his character was above the suspicion of private avarice. By himself, or by his emissaries, he strove to persuade every rank of subjects, that their own prosperity would rise in just proportion to the establishment of his authority. The weight of taxes was suspended, the perpetual theme of popular complaint; and he prohibited the trials by the ordeal and judicial combat. These Barbaric institutions were already abolished or undermined in France¹⁵ and England¹⁶; and the appeal to the sword offended the sense of a civilized¹⁷, and the temper of an unwarlike, people. For the future maintenance of their wives and children, the veterans were grateful: the priest and the philosopher applauded his ardent zeal for the advancement of religion and learning; and his vague promise of rewarding merit, was applied by every candidate to his own hopes. Conscious of the influence of the clergy, Michael successfully laboured to secure the suffrage of that powerful order. Their expensive journey from Nice to Magnesia, afforded a decent and ample pretence: the leading prelates were tempted by the liberality of his

nocturnal visits; and the incorruptible patriarch was flattered by the homage of his new colleague, who led his mule by the bridle into the town, and removed to a respectful distance the importunity of the crowd. Without renouncing his title by royal descent, Palæologus encouraged a free discussion into the advantages of elective monarchy; and his adherents asked, with the insolence of triumph, what patient would trust his health, or what merchant would abandon his vessel, to the *hereditary* skill of a physician or a pilot? The youth of the emperor, and the impending dangers of a minority, required the support of a mature and experienced guardian; of an associate, raised above the envy of his equals, and invested with the name and prerogatives of royalty. For the interest of the prince and people, without any selfish views for himself or his family, the great duke consented to guard and instruct the son of Theodore; but he sighed for the happy moment when he might restore to his firmer hands the administration of his patrimony, and enjoy the blessings of a private station. He was first invested with the title and prerogatives of *despot*, which bestowed the purple ornaments, and the second place in the Roman monarchy. It was afterwards agreed that John and Michael should be proclaimed as joint-emperors, and raised on the buckler, but that the pre-eminence should be reserved for the birth-right of the former. A mutual league of amity was pledged between the royal partners; and in case of a rupture, the

CHAP. LXII. subjects were bound, by their oath of allegiance, to declare themselves against the aggressor, an ambiguous name, the seed of discord and civil war. Palæologus was content; but on the day of the coronation, and in the cathedral of Nice, his zealous adherents most vehemently urged the just priority of his age and merit. The unreasonable dispute was eluded by postponing to a more convenient opportunity the coronation of John Lafcaris; and he walked with a slight diadem in the train of his guardian, who alone received the Imperial crown from the hands of the patriarch. It was not without extreme reluctance that Arsenius abandoned the cause of his pupil; but the Varangians brandished their battle-axes; a sign of assent was extorted from the trembling youth; and some voices were heard, that the life of a child should no longer impede the settlement of the nation. A full harvest of honours and employments was distributed among his friends by the grateful Palæologus. In his own family he created a despot and two sebastocrators; Alexius Strategopulus was decorated with the title of Cæsar; and that veteran commander soon repaid the obligation, by restoring Constantinople to the Greek emperor.

Michael Palæologus emperor,
A. D. 1260,
January 1.

Recovery of Constantinople.
A. D. 1261,
July 25.

It was in the second year of his reign, while he resided in the palace and gardens of Nymphæum¹⁸ near Smyrna, that the first messenger arrived at the dead of night; and the stupendous intelligence was imparted to Michael, after he had been gently waked by the tender precaution

of his sister Eulogia. The man was unknown or obscure; he produced no letters from the victorious Cæsar; nor could it easily be credited after the defeat of Vataces and the recent failure of Palæologus himself, that the capital had been surpris'd by a detachment of eight hundred soldiers. As an hostage, the doubtful author was confined, with the assurance of death or an ample recompence; and the court was left some hours in the anxiety of hope and fear, till the messengers of Alexius arrived with the authentic intelligence, and displayed the trophies of the conquest, the sword and sceptre¹⁹, the buskins and bonnet²⁰, of the usurper Baldwin, which he had dropt in his precipitate flight. A general assembly of the bishops, senators, and nobles, was immediately convened, and never perhaps was an event received with more heartfelt and universal joy. In a studied oration, the new sovereign of Constantinople congratulated his own and the public fortune. "There was a time," said he, "a far
" distant time, when the Roman empire extended
" to the Adriatic, the Tigris, and the confines
" of Æthiopia. After the loss of the provinces,
" our capital itself, in these last and calamitous
" days, has been wrested from our hands by the
" Barbarians of the West. From the lowest ebb,
" the tide of prosperity has again returned in
" our favour; but our prosperity was that of
" fugitives and exiles; and when we were asked,
" which was the country of the Romans, we
" indicated with a blush the climate of the globe

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Return of the
Greek em-
peror,
A. D. 1261,
August 14.

“and the quarter of the heavens. The divine
“Providence has now restored to our arms the
“city of Constantine, the sacred seat of reli-
“gion and empire; and it will depend on our
“valour and conduct to render this important
“acquisition the pledge and omen of future
“victories.” So eager was the impatience of
the prince and people, that Michael made his
triumphal entry into Constantinople only twenty
days after the expulsion of the Latins. The
golden gate was thrown open at his approach;
the devout conqueror dismounted from his horse;
and a miraculous image of Mary the Conductress
was borne before him, that the divine Virgin in
person might appear to conduct him to the
temple of her son, the cathedral of St. Sophia.
But after the first transport of devotion and pride,
he sighed at the dreary prospect of solitude and
ruin. The palace was defiled with smoke and
dirt, and the gross intemperance of the Franks;
whole streets had been consumed by fire, or were
decayed by the injuries of time; the sacred and
profane edifices were stripped of their ornaments;
and, as if they were conscious of their approach-
ing exile, the industry of the Latins had been
confined to the work of pillage and destruction.
Trade had expired under the pressure of anarchy
and distress; and the numbers of inhabitants had
decreased with the opulence of the city. It was
the first care of the Greek monarch to reinstate
the nobles in the palaces of their fathers; and
the houses or the ground which they occupied

were restored to the families that could exhibit a legal right of inheritance. But the far greater part was extinct or lost; the vacant property had devolved to the lord; he repeopled Constantinople by a liberal invitation to the provinces; and the brave *volunteers* were seated in the capital which had been recovered by their arms. The French barons and the principal families had retired with their emperor; but the patient and humble crowd of Latins was attached to the country, and indifferent to the change of masters. Instead of banishing the factories of the Pisans, Venetians, and Genoese, the prudent conqueror accepted their oaths of allegiance, encouraged their industry, confirmed their privileges, and allowed them to live under the jurisdiction of their proper magistrates. Of these nations, the Pisans and Venetians preserved their respective quarters in the city; but the services and power of the Genoese deserved at the same time the gratitude and the jealousy of the Greeks. Their independent colony was first planted at the seaport town of Heraclea in Thrace. They were speedily recalled and settled in the exclusive possession of the suburb of Galata, an advantageous post, in which they revived the commerce, and insulted the majesty, of the Byzantine empire.

The recovery of Constantinople was celebrated as the æra of a new empire: the conqueror alone, and by the right of the sword, renewed his coronation in the church of St. Sophia; and

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Palæologus
blinds and
banishes the
young emperor,

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A. D. 1261,
Dec. 25.

the name and honours of John Lascaris, his pupil and lawful sovereign, were insensibly abolished. But his claims still lived in the minds of the people; and the royal youth must speedily attain the years of manhood and ambition. By fear or conscience, Palæologus was restrained from dipping his hands in innocent and royal blood; but the anxiety of an usurper and a parent urged him to secure his throne, by one of those imperfect crimes so familiar to the modern Greeks. The loss of sight incapacitated the young prince for the active business of the world: instead of the brutal violence of tearing out his eyes, the visual nerve was destroyed by the intense glare of a red-hot bason²², and John Lascaris was removed to a distant castle, where he spent many years in privacy and oblivion. Such cool and deliberate guilt may seem incompatible with remorse; but if Michael could trust the mercy of heaven, he was not inaccessible to the reproaches and vengeance of mankind, which he had provoked by cruelty and treason. His cruelty imposed on a servile court the duties of applause or silence; but the clergy had a right to speak in the name of their invisible master; and their holy legions were led by a prelate, whose character was above the temptations of hope or fear. After a short abdication of his dignity, Arsenius²³ had consented to ascend the ecclesiastical throne of Constantinople, and to preside in the restoration of the church. His pious simplicity was long deceived by the arts of

Palæologus ; and his patience and submission might soothe the usurper and protect the safety of the young prince. On the news of his inhuman treatment, the patriarch unsheathed the spiritual sword ; and superstition, on this occasion, was enlisted in the cause of humanity and justice. In a synod of bishops, who were stimulated by the example of his zeal, the patriarch pronounced a sentence of excommunication ; though his prudence still repeated the name of Michael in the public prayers. The eastern prelates had not adopted the dangerous maxims of ancient Rome ; nor did they presume to enforce their censures, by deposing princes, or absolving nations from their oaths of allegiance. But the Christian, who had been separated from God and the church, became an object of horror ; and, in a turbulent and fanatic capital, that horror might arm the hand of an assassin, or inflame a sedition of the people. Palæologus felt his danger, confessed his guilt, and deprecated his judge : the act was irretrievable ; the prize was obtained ; and the most rigorous penance, which he solicited, would have raised the sinner to the reputation of a saint. The unrelenting patriarch refused to announce any means of atonement or any hopes of mercy ; and condescended only to pronounce, that, for so great a crime, great indeed must be the satisfaction. “ Do you require,” said Michael, “ that I should abdicate the empire ? ” And at these words, he offered, or seemed to offer, the sword of state. Arsenius

is excommu-
nicated by
the patriarch
Arsenius,
A. D.
1262—1268.

CHAPTER. eagerly grasped this pledge of sovereignty; but
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Schism of the
 Arsenites,

A. D.

1266—1312.

The danger and scandal of this excommunication subsisted above three years, till the popular clamour was assuaged by time and repentance; till the brethren of Arsenius condemned his inflexible spirit, so repugnant to the unbounded forgiveness of the gospel. The emperor had artfully insinuated, that, if he were still rejected at home, he might seek, in the Roman pontiff, a more indulgent judge; but it was far more easy and effectual to find or to place that judge at the head of the Byzantine church. Arsenius was involved in a vague rumour of conspiracy and disaffection; some irregular steps in his ordination and government were liable to censure; a synod deposed him from the episcopal office; and he was transported under a guard of soldiers to a small island of the Propontis. Before his exile, he suddenly requested that a strict account might be taken of the treasures of the church; boasted that his sole riches, three pieces of gold, had been earned by transcribing the psalms; continued to assert the freedom of his mind; and denied, with his last breath, the pardon which was implored by the royal sinner²⁵. After some delay, Gregory, bishop of Adrianople, was translated to the Byzantine throne; but his authority was found insufficient to support the

absolution of the emperor ; and Joseph, a reverend monk, was substituted to that important function. This edifying scene was represented in the presence of the senate and people ; at the end of six years, the humble penitent was restored to the communion of the faithful ; and humanity will rejoice, that a milder treatment of the captive Lascaris was stipulated as a proof of his remorse. But the spirit of Arsenius still survived in a powerful faction of the monks and clergy, who persevered above forty-eight years in an obstinate schism. Their scruples were treated with tenderness and respect by Michael and his son ; and the reconciliation of the Arsenites was the serious labour of the church and state. In the confidence of fanaticism they had proposed to try their cause by a miracle ; and when the two papers, that contained their own and the adverse cause, were cast into a fiery brasier, they expected that the Catholic verity would be respected by the flames. Alas ! the two papers were indiscriminately consumed, and this unforeseen accident produced the union of a day, and renewed the quarrel of an age²⁶. The final treaty displayed the victory of the Arsenites : the clergy abstained during forty days from all ecclesiastical functions ; a slight penance was imposed on the laity ; the body of Arsenius was deposited in the sanctuary ; and in the name of the departed saint, the prince and people were released from the sins of their fathers²⁷.

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Reign of
Michael Palæologus,

A. D. 1259.

Dec. 1—

A. D. 1282,

Dec. 11.

Reign of
Andronicus
the Elder,

A. D. 1273,

Nov. 8—

A. D. 1332,

February 13.

The establishment of his family was the motive, or at least the pretence, of the crime of Palæologus; and he was impatient to confirm the succession, by sharing with his eldest son the honours of the purple. Andronicus, afterwards surnamed the Elder, was proclaimed and crowned emperor of the Romans, in the fifteenth year of his age; and, from the first æra of a prolix and inglorious reign, he held that august title nine years as the colleague, and fifty as the successor, of his father. Michael himself, had he died in a private station, would have been thought more worthy of the empire: and the assaults of his temporal and spiritual enemies, left him few moments to labour for his own fame or the happiness of his subjects. He wrested from the Franks several of the noblest islands of the Archipelago, Lesbos, Chios, and Rhodes: his brother Constantine was sent to command in Malvasia and Sparta; and the eastern side of the Morea, from Argos and Napoli to Cape Tænarus, was repossessed by the Greeks. This effusion of Christian blood was loudly condemned by the patriarch; and the insolent priest presumed to interpose his fears and scruples between the arms of princes. But in the prosecution of these western conquests, the countries beyond the Hellespont were left naked to the Turks; and their depredations verified the prophecy of a dying senator, that the recovery of Constantinople would be the ruin of Asia. The victories of Michael were achieved by his lieutenants; his sword rusted in the palace; and in

the transactions of the emperor with the popes and the king of Naples, his political arts were stained with cruelty and fraud²⁸. C H A P. LXII.

I. The Vatican was the most natural refuge of a Latin emperor, who had been driven from his throne; and pope Urban the fourth appeared to pity the misfortunes, and vindicate the cause, of the fugitive Baldwin. A crusade, with plenary indulgence, was preached by his command against the schismatic Greeks; he excommunicated their allies and adherents; solicited Louis the ninth in favour of his kinsman; and demanded a tenth of the ecclesiastic revenues of France and England for the service of the holy war²⁹. The subtle Greek, who watched the rising tempest of the West, attempted to suspend or soothe the hostility of the pope, by suppliant embassies and respectful letters; but he insinuated that the establishment of peace must prepare the reconciliation and obedience of the Eastern church. The Roman court could not be deceived by so gross an artifice; and Michael was admonished, that the repentance of the son should precede the forgiveness of the father; and that *faith* (an ambiguous word) was the only basis of friendship and alliance. After a long and affected delay, the approach of danger, and the importunity of Gregory the tenth, compelled him to enter on a more serious negociation: he alleged the example of the great Vatases; and the Greek clergy, who understood the intentions of their prince, were not alarmed by the first steps of reconciliation and respect. But when he

His union
with the La-
tin church,
A. D.
1274—1277.

CHAP.
LXII.

pressed the conclusion of the treaty, they strenuously declared, that the Latins, though not in name, were heretics in fact, and that they despised those strangers as the vilest and most despicable portion of the human race³⁰. It was the task of the emperor to persuade, to corrupt, to intimidate, the most popular ecclesiastics, to gain the vote of each individual, and, alternately to urge the arguments of Christian charity and the public welfare. The texts of the fathers and the arms of the Franks were balanced in the theological and political scale; and without approving the addition to the Nicene creed, the most moderate were taught to confess, that the two hostile propositions of proceeding from the Father BY the Son, and of proceeding from the Father AND the Son, might be reduced to a safe and Catholic sense³¹. The supremacy of the pope was a doctrine more easy to conceive, but more painful to acknowledge; yet Michael represented to his monks and prelates, that they might submit to name the Roman bishop as the first of the patriarchs; and that their distance and discretion would guard the liberties of the Eastern church from the mischievous consequences of the right of appeal. He protested that he would sacrifice his life and empire, rather than yield the smallest point of orthodox faith or national independence; and this declaration was sealed and ratified by a golden bull. The patriarch Joseph withdrew to a monastery, to resign or resume his throne, according to the event of the treaty:

the letters of union and obedience were subscribed by the emperor, his son Andronicus, and thirty-five archbishops and metropolitans, with their respective synods; and the episcopal list was multiplied by many dioceses which were annihilated under the yoke of the infidels. An embassy was composed of some trusty ministers and prelates; they embarked for Italy, with rich ornaments and rare perfumes, for the altar of St. Peter; and their secret orders authorised and recommended a boundless compliance. They were received in the general council of Lyons, by pope Gregory the tenth, at the head of five hundred bishops³². He embraced with tears his long-lost and repentant children; accepted the oath of the ambassadors, who abjured the schism in the name of the two emperors; adorned the prelates with the ring and mitre; chaunted in Greek and Latin the Nicene creed with the addition of *filioque*; and rejoiced in the union of the East and West, which had been reserved for his reign. To consummate this pious work, the Byzantine deputies were speedily followed by the pope's nuncios; and their instruction discloses the policy of the Vatican, which could not be satisfied with the vain title of supremacy. After viewing the temper of the prince and people, they were enjoined to absolve the schismatic clergy, who should subscribe and swear their abjuration and obedience; to establish in all the churches the use of the perfect creed; to prepare the entrance of a cardinal legate, with the full powers and dignity of his

C H A P.
LXII.

His persecu-
tion of the
Greeks,

A. D.
1277—1282.

office; and to instruct the emperor in the advantages which he might derive from the temporal protection of the Roman pontiff³³.

But they found a country without a friend, a nation in which the names of Rome and Union were pronounced with abhorrence. The patriarch Joseph was indeed removed; his place was filled by Vecceus, an ecclesiastic of learning and moderation; and the emperor was still urged by the same motives, to persevere in the same professions. But in his private language, Palæologus affected to deplore the pride, and to blame the innovations, of the Latins; and while he debased his character by this double hypocrisy, he justified and punished the opposition of his subjects. By the joint suffrage of the new and the ancient Rome, a sentence of excommunication was pronounced against the obstinate schismatics: the censures of the church were executed by the sword of Michael; on the failure of persuasion, he tried the arguments of prison and exile, of whipping and mutilation; those touch-stones, says an historian, of cowards and the brave. Two Greeks still reigned in Ætolia, Epirus, and Thessaly, with the appellation of despots: they had yielded to the sovereign of Constantinople, but they rejected the chains of the Roman pontiff, and supported their refusal by successful arms. Under their protection, the fugitive monks and bishops assembled in hostile synods; and retorted the name of heretic with the galling addition of apostate: the prince of Trebizond was tempted to

to assume the forfeit title of emperor; and even the Latins of Negropont, Thebes, Athens, and the Morea, forgot the merits of the convert, to join, with open or clandestine aid, the enemies of Palæologus. His favourite generals, of his own blood and family, successively deserted, or betrayed, the sacrilegious trust. His sister Eulogia, a niece, and two female cousins, conspired against him; another niece, Mary queen of Bulgaria, negociated his ruin with the sultan of Egypt; and, in the public eye, their treason was consecrated as the most sublime virtue²⁴. To the pope's nuncios, who urged the consummation of the work, Palæologus exposed a naked recital of all that he had done and suffered for their sake. They were assured that the guilty sectaries, of both sexes and every rank, had been deprived of their honours, their fortunes, and their liberty; a spreading list of confiscation and punishment, which involved many persons, the dearest to the emperor, or the best deserving of his favour. They were conducted to the prison, to behold four princes of the royal blood chained in the four corners, and shaking their fetters in an agony of grief and rage. Two of these captives were afterwards released; the one by submission, the other by death: but the obstinacy of their two companions was chastised by the loss of their eyes; and the Greeks, the least adverse to the union, deplore that cruel and inauspicious tragedy²⁵. Persecutors must expect the hatred of those whom they oppress; but they commonly

CHAP.
LXII.

The union
dissolved,
A. D. 1283.

Charles of
Anjou sub-
dues Naples
and Sicily,
A. D. 1266,
February 26.

find some consolation in the testimony of their conscience, the applause of their party, and, perhaps, the success of their undertaking. But the hypocrisy of Michael, which was prompted only by political motives, must have forced him to hate himself, to despise his followers, and to esteem and envy the rebel champions by whom he was detested and despised. While his violence was abhorred at Constantinople, at Rome his slowness was arraigned and his sincerity suspected; till at length pope Martin the fourth excluded the Greek emperor from the pale of a church, into which he was striving to reduce a schismatic people. No sooner had the tyrant expired, than the union was dissolved, and abjured by unanimous consent; the churches were purified; the penitents were reconciled; and his son Andronicus, after weeping the sins and errors of his youth, most piously denied his father the burial of a prince and a Christian³⁶.

II. In the distress of the Latins, the walls and towers of Constantinople had fallen to decay: they were restored and fortified by the policy of Michael, who deposited a plenteous store of corn and salt provisions, to sustain the siege which he might hourly expect from the resentment of the Western powers. Of these, the sovereign of the two Sicilies was the most formidable neighbour; but as long as they were possessed by Mainfroy, the bastard of Frederic the second, his monarchy was the bulwark rather than the annoyance of the Eastern empire. The usurper, though a brave and active prince, was

sufficiently employed in the defence of his throne : his proscription by successive popes had separated Mainfroy from the common cause of the Latins ; and the forces that might have besieged Constantinople , were detained in a crusade against the domestic enemy of Rome. The prize of her avenger, the crown of the two Sicilies, was won and worn by the brother of St. Louis, by Charles count of Anjou and Provence, who led the chivalry of France on this holy expedition³⁷. The disaffection of his Christian subjects compelled Mainfroy to enlist a colony of Saracens whom his father had planted in Apulia : and this odious succour will explain the defiance of the Catholic hero , who rejected all terms of accommodation. “ Bear this message ,” said Charles, “ to the sultan of Nocera, that God and the sword are umpire between us ; and that he shall either send me to paradise , or I will send him to the pit of hell.” The armies met, and though I am ignorant of Mainfroy’s doom in the other world, in this he lost his friends, his kingdom, and his life, in the bloody battle of Benevento. Naples and Sicily were immediately peopled with a warlike race of French nobles ; and their aspiring leader embraced the future conquest of Africa, Greece, and Palestine. The most specious reasons might point his first arms against the Byzantine empire ; and Palæologus, diffident of his own strength , repeatedly appealed from the ambition of Charles to the humanity of St. Louis, who still preserved a just ascendant over the mind of

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his ferocious brother. For a while the attention of that brother was confined at home by the invasion of Conradin, the last heir of the Imperial house of Swabia: but the hapless boy sunk in the unequal conflict; and his execution on a public scaffold taught the rivals of Charles to tremble for their heads as well as their dominions. A second respite was obtained by the last crusade of St. Louis to the African coast; and the double motive of interest and duty urged the king of Naples to assist, with his powers and his presence, the holy enterprise. The death of St. Louis released him from the importunity of a virtuous censor; the king of Tunis confessed himself the tributary and vassal of the crown of Sicily; and the boldest of the French knights were free to enlist under his banner against the Greek empire. A treaty and a marriage united his interest with the house of Courtenay; his daughter Beatrice was promised to Philip, son and heir of the emperor Baldwin; a pension of six hundred ounces of gold was allowed for his maintenance; and his generous father distributed among his allies the kingdoms and provinces of the East, reserving only Constantinople, and one day's journey round the city, for the Imperial domain³⁸. In this perilous moment, Palæologus was the most eager to subscribe the creed, and implore the protection, of the Roman pontiff, who assumed, with propriety and weight, the character of an angel of peace, the common father of the Christians. By his voice, the sword of Charles was

Threatens
the Greek
empire,
A. D. 1270.
etc.

chained in the scabbard; and the Greek ambassadors beheld him, in the pope's antichamber, biting his ivory sceptre in a transport of fury, and deeply resenting the refusal to enfranchise and consecrate his arms. He appears to have respected the disinterested mediation of Gregory the tenth; but Charles was insensibly disgusted by the pride and partiality of Nicholas the third; and his attachment to his kindred, the Ursini family, alienated the most strenuous champion from the service of the church. The hostile league against the Greeks, of Philip the Latin emperor, the king of the two Sicilies, and the republic of Venice, was ripened into execution; and the election of Martin the fourth, a French pope, gave a sanction to the cause. Of the allies, Philip supplied his name, Martin, a bull of excommunication, the Venetians, a squadron of forty galleys; and the formidable powers of Charles consisted of forty counts, ten thousand men at arms, a numerous body of infantry, and a fleet of more than three hundred ships and transports. A distant day was appointed for assembling this mighty force in the harbour of Brindisi: and a previous attempt was risked with a detachment of three hundred knights, who invaded Albania and besieged the fortrefs of Belgrade. Their defeat might amuse with a triumph the vanity of Constantinople; but the more sagacious Michael, despairing of his arms, depended on the effects of a conspiracy; on the

CHAP. secret workings of a rat, who gnawed the bow-
 LXII. string³⁹ of the Sicilian tyrant.

Palæologus
 instigates
 the revolt of
 Sicily,
 A. D. 1280.

Among the proscribed adherents of the house of Swabia, John of Procida forfeited a small island of that name in the bay of Naples. His birth was noble, but his education was learned; and in the poverty of exile, he was relieved by the practice of physic, which he had studied in the school of Salerno. Fortune had left him nothing to lose, except life; and to despise life is the first qualification of a rebel. Procida was endowed with the art of negociation, to enforce his reasons, and disguise his motives; and in his various transactions with nations and men, he could persuade each party that he laboured solely for *their* interest. The new kingdoms of Charles were afflicted by every species of fiscal and military oppression⁴⁰; and the lives and fortunes of his Italian subjects were sacrificed to the greatness of their master and the licentiousness of his followers. The hatred of Naples was repressed by his presence; but the looser government of his vicegerents excited the contempt, as well as the aversion, of the Sicilians: the island was roused to a sense of freedom by the eloquence of Procida; and he displayed to every baron his private interest in the common cause. In the confidence of foreign aid, he successively visited the courts of the Greek emperor, and of Peter king of Arragon⁴¹, who possessed the maritime countries of Valencia and Catalonia. To the ambitious Peter a crown was presented, which he might

justly claim by his marriage with the sister of Mainfroy, and by the dying voice of Conradin, who from the scaffold had cast a ring to his heir and avenger. Palæologus was easily persuaded to divert his enemy from a foreign war by a rebellion at home; and a Greek subsidy of twenty-five thousand ounces of gold was most profitably applied to arm a Catalan fleet, which sailed under an holy banner to the specious attack of the Saracens of Africa. In the disguise of a monk or beggar, the indefatigable missionary of revolt flew from Constantinople to Rome, and from Sicily to Saragossa: the treaty was sealed with the signet of pope Nicholas himself, the enemy of Charles; and his deed of gift transferred the fiefs of St. Peter from the house of Anjou to that of Arragon. So widely diffused and so freely circulated, the secret was preserved above two years with impenetrable discretion; and each of the conspirators imbibed the maxim of Peter, who declared that he would cut off his left-hand if it were conscious of the intentions of his right. The mine was prepared with deep and dangerous artifice; but it may be questioned, whether the instant explosion of Palermo were the effect of accident or design.

On the vigil of Easter, a procession of the disarmed citizens visited a church without the walls; and a noble damsel was rudely insulted by a French soldier⁴². The ravisher was instantly punished with death; and if the people was at first scattered by a military force, their numbers

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LXII.

The Sicilian
Vespers,
A. D. 1282,
March 30.

C H A P.
LXII.

and fury prevailed : the conspirators seized the opportunity ; the flame spread over the island ; and eight thousand French were exterminated in a promiscuous massacre, which has obtained the name of the SICILIAN VESPERS ⁴¹. From every city the banners of freedom and the church were displayed : the revolt was inspired by the presence or the soul of Procida ; and Peter of Arragon, who sailed from the African coast to Palermo, was saluted as the king and saviour of the isle. By the rebellion of a people on whom he had so long trampled with impunity, Charles was astonished and confounded ; and in the first agony of grief and devotion, he was heard to exclaim, “ O God ! if thou hast decreed to humble me, grant “ me at least a gentle and gradual descent from the “ pinnacle of greatness ! ” His fleet and army, which already filled the sea-ports of Italy, were hastily recalled from the service of the Grecian war ; and the situation of Messina exposed that town to the first storm of his revenge. Feeble in themselves, and yet hopeless of foreign succour, the citizens would have repented, and submitted on the assurance of full pardon and their ancient privileges. But the pride of the monarch was already rekindled ; and the most fervent intreaties of the legate could extort no more than a promise, that he would forgive the remainder, after a chosen list of eight hundred rebels had been yielded to his discretion. The despair of the Messinese renewed their courage : Peter of Arragon approached to their relief ⁴² ; and his rival was driven back by the failure of provision and the

terrors of the equinox to the Calabrian shore. At the same moment, the Catalan admiral, the famous Roger de Loria, swept the channel with an invincible squadron: the French fleet, more numerous in transports than in gallies, was either burnt or destroyed; and the same blow assured the independence of Sicily and the safety of the Greek empire. A few days before his death, the emperor Michael rejoiced in the fall of an enemy whom he hated and esteemed; and perhaps he might be content with the popular judgment, that had they not been matched with each other, Constantinople and Italy must speedily have obeyed the same master⁴⁵. From this disastrous moment, the life of Charles was a series of misfortunes; his capital was insulted, his son was made prisoner, and he sunk into the grave without recovering the isle of Sicily, which, after a war of twenty years, was finally severed from the throne of Naples, and transferred, as an independent kingdom, to a younger branch of the house of Arragon⁴⁶.

C H A P.
LXII.
Defeat of
Charles.
October 2.

I shall not, I trust, be accused of superstition: but I must remark, that, even in this world, the natural order of events will sometimes afford the strong appearances of moral retribution. The first Palæologus had saved his empire by involving the kingdoms of the West in rebellion and blood; and from these seeds of discord, arose a generation of iron men, who assaulted and endangered the empire of his son. In modern times, our debts and taxes are the secret poison, which

The service
and war of
the Catalans
in the Greek
empire,
A. D.
1303—1307.

CHAP. LXII. still corrodes the bosom of peace ; but in the weak and disorderly government of the middle ages, it was agitated by the present evil of the disbanded armies. Too idle to work, too proud to beg, the mercenaries were accustomed to a life of rapine: they could rob with more dignity and effect under a banner and a chief; and the sovereign, to whom their service was useless and their presence importunate, endeavoured to discharge the torrent on some neighbouring countries. After the peace of Sicily, many thousands of Genoese, *Catalans* ⁴⁷, &c. who had fought, by sea and land, under the standard of Anjou or Arragon, were blended into one nation by the resemblance of their manners and interest. They heard that the Greek provinces of Asia were invaded by the Turks: they resolved to share the harvest of pay and plunder; and Frederic king of Sicily most liberally contributed the means of their departure. In a warfare of twenty years, a ship, or a camp, was become their country; arms were their sole profession and property; valour was the only virtue which they knew; their women had imbibed the fearless temper of their lovers and husbands: it was reported, that, with a stroke of their broad-sword, the Catalans could cleave a horseman and an horse; and the report itself was a powerful weapon. Roger de Flor was the most popular of their chiefs; and his personal merit overshadowed the dignity of his prouder rivals of Arragon. The offspring of a marriage between a German gentleman of the

court of Frederic the second and a damsel of Brindisi, Roger was successively a templar, an apostate, a pirate, and at length the richest and most powerful admiral of the Mediterranean. He sailed from Messina to Constantinople, with eighteen gallies, four great ships, and eight thousand adventurers; and his previous treaty was faithfully accomplished by Andronicus the elder, who accepted with joy and terror this formidable succour. A palace was allotted for his reception, and a niece of the emperor was given in marriage to the valiant stranger, who was immediately created great duke or admiral of Romania. After a decent repose, he transported his troops over the Propontis, and boldly led them against the Turks: in two bloody battles thirty thousand of the Moslems were slain: he raised the siege of Philadelphia, and deserved the name of the deliverer of Asia. But after a short season of prosperity, the cloud of slavery and ruin again burst on that unhappy province. The inhabitants escaped (says a Greek historian) from the smoke into the flames; and the hostility of the Turks was less pernicious than the friendship of the Catalans. The lives and fortunes which they had rescued, they considered as their own: the willing or reluctant maid was saved from the race of circumcision for the embraces of a Christian soldier: the exaction of fines and supplies was enforced by licentious rapine and arbitrary executions; and, on the resistance of Magnesia, the great duke besieged a city of the

CHAP. Roman empire ". These disorders he excused
 LXII. by the wrongs and passions of a victorious army; nor would his own authority or person have been safe, had he dared to punish his faithful followers, who were defrauded of the just and covenanted price of their services. The threats and complaints of Andronicus disclosed the nakedness of the empire. His golden bull had invited no more than five hundred horse and a thousand foot soldiers; yet the crowds of volunteers, who migrated to the East, had been enlisted and fed by his spontaneous bounty. While his bravest allies were content with three byzants, or pieces of gold, for their monthly pay, an ounce, or even two ounces, of gold were assigned to the Catalans, whose annual pension would thus amount to near an hundred pounds sterling: one of their chiefs had modestly rated at three hundred thousand crowns the value of his *future* merits; and above a million had been issued from the treasury for the maintenance of these costly mercenaries. A cruel tax had been imposed on the corn of the husbandman: one third was retrenched from the salaries of the public officers; and the standard of the coin was so shamefully debased, that of the four-and-twenty parts only five were of pure gold ". At the summons of the emperor, Roger evacuated a province which no longer supplied the materials of rapine; but he refused to disperse his troops; and while his style was respectful, his conduct was independent and hostile. He protested, that if the emperor should march against

him, he would advance forty paces to kiss the ground before him, but in rising from this prostrate attitude Roger had a life and sword at the service of his friends. The great duke of Romania condescended to accept the title and ornaments of Cæsar; but he rejected the new proposal of the government of Asia with a subsidy of corn and money, on condition that he should reduce his troops to the harmless number of three thousand men. Assassination is the last resource of cowards. The Cæsar was tempted to visit the royal residence of Adrianople: in the apartment, and before the eyes, of the empress, he was stabbed by the Alani guards; and, though the deed was imputed to their private revenge, his countrymen, who dwelt at Constantinople in the security of peace, were involved in the same proscription by the prince or people. The loss of their leader intimidated the crowd of adventurers, who hoisted the sails of flight, and were soon scattered round the coasts of the Mediterranean. But a veteran band of fifteen hundred Catalans or French stood firm in the strong fortrefs of Gallipoli on the Hellespont, displayed the banners of Arragon, and offered to revenge and justify their chief by an equal combat of ten or an hundred warriors. Instead of accepting this bold defiance, the emperor Michael, the son and colleague of Andronicus, resolved to oppress them with the weight of multitudes: every nerve was strained to form an army of thirteen thousand horse and thirty thousand foot; and the Propontis

C H A P. was covered with the ships of the Greeks and
 LXII. Genoese. In two battles by sea and land, these
 mighty forces were encountered and overthrown
 by the despair and discipline of the Catalans; the
 young emperor fled to the palace; and an insuf-
 ficient guard of light-horse was left for the pro-
 tection of the open country. Victory renewed
 the hopes and numbers of the adventurers: every
 nation was blended under the name and standard
 of the *great company*; and three thousand Turkish
 profelytes deserted from the Imperial service to
 join this military association. In the possession
 of Gallipoli, the Catalans intercepted the trade
 of Constantinople and the Black Sea, while they
 spread their devastations on either side of the
 Hellespont over the confines of Europe and Asia.
 To prevent their approach, the greatest part of
 the Byzantine territory was laid waste by the
 Greeks themselves: the peasants and their cattle
 retired into the city; and myriads of sheep and
 oxen, for which neither place nor foot could be
 procured, were unprofitably slaughtered on the
 same day. Four times the emperor Andronicus
 sued for peace, and four times he was inflexibly
 repulsed, till the want of provisions, and the
 discord of the chiefs, compelled the Catalans to
 evacuate the banks of the Hellespont and the
 neighbourhood of the capital. After their separ-
 ation from the Turks, the remains of the great
 company pursued their march through Macedo-
 nia and Thessaly, to seek a new establishment in
 the heart of Greece⁵⁰.

After some ages of oblivion, Greece was awakened to new misfortunes by the arms of the Latins. In the two hundred and fifty years between the first and the last conquest of Constantinople, that venerable land was disputed by a multitude of petty tyrants; without the comforts of freedom and genius, her ancient cities were again plunged in foreign and intestine war; and, if servitude be preferable to anarchy, they might repose with joy under the Turkish yoke. I shall not pursue the obscure and various dynasties, that rose and fell on the continent or in the isles; but our silence on the fate of ATHENS¹, would argue a strange ingratitude to the first and purest school of liberal science and amusement. In the partition of the empire, the principality of Athens and Thebes was assigned to Otho de la Roche, a noble warrior of Burgundy², with the title of great duke³, which the Latins understood in their own sense, and the Greeks more foolishly derived from the age of Constantine⁴. Otho followed the standard of the marquis of Montferat; the ample state which he acquired by a miracle of conduct or fortune⁵, was peaceably inherited by his son and two grandsons, till the family, though not the nation, was changed, by the marriage of an heiress, into the elder branch of the house of Brienne. The son of that marriage, Walter de Brienne, succeeded to the duchy of Athens; and, with the aid of some Catalan mercenaries, whom he invested with fiefs, reduced above thirty castles of the vassal or neighbouring lords. But when he was informed of

C H A P.

LXII.

Revolutions
of Athens,

A. D.

1204—1456.

CHAP. the approach and ambition of the great company,
 LXII. he collected a force of seven hundred knights,
 six thousand four hundred horse, and eight thousand
 foot, and boldly met them on the banks
 of the river Cephissus in Bœotia. The Catalans
 amounted to no more than three thousand five
 hundred horse, and four thousand foot: but the
 deficiency of numbers was compensated by strata-
 agem and order. They formed round their camp
 an artificial inundation: the duke and his knights
 advanced without fear or precaution on the
 verdant meadow: their horses plunged into the
 bog; and he was cut in pieces, with the greatest
 part of the French cavalry. His family and nation
 were expelled; and his son Walter de Brienne,
 the titular duke of Athens, the tyrant of Florence,
 and the constable of France, lost his life in the
 field of Poitiers. Attica and Bœotia were the
 rewards of the victorious Catalans: they married
 the widows and daughters of the slain; and during
 fourteen years, the great company was the ter-
 ror of the Grecian states. Their factions drove
 them to acknowledge the sovereignty of the
 house of Arragon; and during the remainder of
 the fourteenth century, Athens, as a govern-
 ment or an appanage, was successively bestowed
 by the kings of Sicily. After the French and
 Catalans, the third dynasty was that of the Ac-
 caioli, a family, plebeian at Florence, potent at
 Naples, and sovereign in Greece. Athens, which
 they embellished with new buildings, became
 the capital of a state, that extended over Thebes,
 Argos,

Argos, Corinth, Delphi, and a part of Thessaly; and their reign was finally determined by Mahomet the second, who strangled the last duke, and educated his sons in the discipline and religion of the seraglio.

C H A P.
LXII.

Athens⁵⁶, though no more than the shadow of her former self, still contains about eight or ten thousand inhabitants: of these, three-fourths are Greeks in religion and language; and the Turks, who compose the remainder, have relaxed, in their intercourse with the citizens, somewhat of the pride and gravity of their national character. The olive-tree, the gift of Minerva, flourishes in Attica; nor has the honey of mount Hymettus lost any part of its exquisite flavour⁵⁷: but the languid trade is monopolized by strangers; and the agriculture of a barren land is abandoned to the vagrant Walachians. The Athenians are still distinguished by the subtlety and acuteness of their understandings: but these qualities, unless ennobled by freedom and enlightened by study, will degenerate into a low and selfish cunning: and it is a proverbial saying of the country, "From the Jews of Thessalonica, the Turks of Negropont, and the Greeks of Athens, good Lord deliver us!" This artful people has eluded the tyranny of the Turkish bashaws, by an expedient which alleviates their servitude and aggravates their shame. About the middle of the last century, the Athenians chose for their protector the Kishlar Aga, or chief black eunuch of the seraglio. This Ethiopian slave, who possesses

Present state
of Athens.

C H A P. the sultan's ear, condescends to accept the tribute
 LXII. of thirty thousand crowns: his lieutenant, the
 Waywode, whom he annually confirms, may
 reserve for his own about five or six thousand
 more; and such is the policy of the citizens, that
 they seldom fail to remove and punish an oppres-
 sive governor. Their private differences are de-
 cided by the archbishop, one of the richest pre-
 lates of the Greek church, since he possesses a
 revenue of one thousand pounds sterling; and by
 a tribunal of the eight *geronti* or elders, chosen in
 the eight quarters of the city: the noble families
 cannot trace their pedigree above three hundred
 years; but their principal members are distinguished
 by a grave demeanour, a fur-cap, and the lofty
 appellation of *archon*. By some, who delight in
 the contrast, the modern language of Athens is
 represented as the most corrupt and barbarous of
 the seventy dialects of the vulgar Greek⁵⁸: this
 picture is too darkly coloured; but it would not
 be easy, in the country of Plato and Demosthenes,
 to find a reader, or a copy, of their works. The
 Athenians walk with supine indifference among
 the glorious ruins of antiquity; and such is the
 debasement of their character, that they are in-
 capable of admiring the genius of their predeces-
 sors⁵⁹.

C H A P. LXIII.

Civil Wars, and ruin of the Greek Empire.—Reigns of Andronicus, the Elder and Younger, and John Palæologus.—Regency, Revolt, Reign, and Abdication of John Cantacuzene.—Establishment of a Genoese Colony at Pera or Galata.—Their Wars with the Empire and City of Constantinople.

THE long reign of Andronicus² the elder is chiefly memorable, by the disputes of the Greek church, the invasion of the Catalans, and the rise of the Ottoman power. He is celebrated as the most learned and virtuous prince of the age; but such virtue, and such learning, contributed neither to the perfection of the individual, nor to the happiness of society. A slave of the most abject superstition, he was surrounded on all sides by visible and invisible enemies; nor were the flames of hell less dreadful to his fancy, than those of a Catalan or Turkish war. Under the reign of the Palæologi, the choice of the patriarch was the most important business of the state; the heads of the Greek church were ambitious and fanatic monks; and their vices or virtues, their learning or ignorance, were equally mischievous or contemptible. By his intemperate discipline,

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LXIII.

Superstition
of Androni-
cus and the
times,

A. D.
1282—1320.

C H A P. the patriarch Athanasius² excited the hatred of
 LXIII. the clergy and people: he was heard to declare,
 that the sinner should swallow the last dregs of
 the cup of penance; and the foolish tale was
 propagated, of his punishing a sacrilegious ass
 that had tasted the lettuce of a convent garden.
 Driven from the throne by the universal clamour,
 Athanasius composed before his retreat two papers
 of a very opposite cast. His public testament was
 in the tone of charity and resignation; the private
 codicil breathed the direst anathemas against the
 authors of his disgrace, whom he excluded for
 ever from the communion of the holy trinity,
 the angels, and the saints. This last paper he
 inclosed in an earthen pot, which was placed,
 by his order, on the top of one of the pillars in
 the dome of St. Sophia, in the distant hope of
 discovery and revenge. At the end of four years,
 some youths, climbing by a ladder in search of
 pigeons nests, detected the fatal secret; and as
 Andronicus felt himself touched and bound by
 the excommunication, he trembled on the brink
 of the abyss which had been so treacherously
 dug under his feet. A synod of bishops was
 instantly convened to debate this important
 question: the rashness of these clandestine anathe-
 mas was generally condemned; but as the knot
 could be untied only by the same hand, as that hand
 was now deprived of the crosier, it appeared
 that this posthumous decree was irrevocable by
 any earthly power. Some faint testimonies of
 repentance and pardon were extorted from the

author of the mischief; but the conscience of the emperor was still wounded, and he desired, with no less ardour than Athanasius himself, the restoration of a patriarch, by whom alone he could be healed. At the dead of night, a monk rudely knocked at the door of the royal bed-chamber, announcing a revelation of plague and famine, of inundations and earthquakes. Andronicus started from his bed, and spent the night in prayer, till he felt, or thought that he felt, a slight motion of the earth. The emperor on foot led the bishops and monks to the cell of Athanasius; and, after a proper resistance, the saint, from whom this message had been sent, consented to absolve the prince, and govern the church, of Constantinople. Untamed by disgrace, and hardened by solitude, the shepherd was again odious to the flock; and his enemies contrived a singular, and as it proved a successful, mode of revenge. In the night, they stole away the footstool or foot-cloth of his throne, which they secretly replaced with the decoration of a satirical picture. The emperor was painted with a bridle in his mouth, and Athanasius leading the tractable beast to the feet of Christ. The authors of the libel were detected and punished; but as their lives had been spared, the Christian priest in fullen indignation retired to his cell; and the eyes of Andronicus, which had been opened for a moment, were again closed by his successor.

If this transaction be one of the most curious and important of a reign of fifty years, I cannot

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at least accuse the brevity of my materials, since I reduce into some few pages the enormous folios of Pachymer³, Cantacuzene⁴, and Nicephorus Gregoras⁵, who have composed the prolix and languid story of the times. The name and situation of the emperor John Cantacuzene might inspire the most lively curiosity. His memorials of forty years extend from the revolt of the younger Andronicus to his own abdication of the empire; and it is observed, that, like Moses and Cæsar, he was the principal actor in the scenes which he describes. But in this eloquent work, we should vainly seek the sincerity of an hero or a penitent. Retired in a cloyster from the vices and passions of the world, he presents not a confession, but an apology, of the life of an ambitious statesman. Instead of unfolding the true counsels and characters of men, he displays the smooth and specious surface of events, highly varnished with his own praises and those of his friends. Their motives are always pure; their ends always legitimate: they conspire and rebel without any views of interest; and the violence which they inflict or suffer is celebrated as the spontaneous effect of reason and virtue.

First disputes
between the
elder and
younger An-
dronicus,
A. D. 1320.

After the example of the first of the Palæologi, the elder Andronicus associated his son Michael to the honours of the purple; and from the age of eighteen to his premature death, that prince was acknowledged, above twenty-five years, as the second emperor of the Greeks⁶. At the

head of an army, he excited neither the fears of the enemy nor the jealousy of the court: his modesty and patience were never tempted to compute the years of his father; nor was that father compelled to repent of his liberality either by the virtues or vices of his son. The son of Michael was named Andronicus from his grandfather, to whose early favour he was introduced by that nominal resemblance. The blossoms of wit and beauty increased the fondness of the elder Andronicus; and, with the common vanity of age, he expected to realize in the second, the hope which had been disappointed in the first, generation. The boy was educated in the palace as an heir and a favourite, and, in the oaths and acclamations of the people, the *august triad* was formed by the names of the father, the son, and the grandson. But the younger Andronicus was speedily corrupted by his infant greatness, while he beheld with puerile impatience the double obstacle that hung, and might long hang, over his rising ambition. It was not to acquire fame, or to diffuse happiness, that he so eagerly aspired: wealth and impunity were in his eyes the most precious attributes of a monarch; and his first indiscreet demand was the sovereignty of some rich and fertile island, where he might lead a life of independence and pleasure. The emperor was offended by the loud and frequent intemperance which disturbed his capital: the sums which his parsimony denied were supplied by the Genoese usurers of Pera; and the oppressive

C H A P. debt which consolidated the interest of a fac-
 LXIII, tion, could be discharged only by a revolution.
 A beautiful female, a matron in rank, a prostitute in manners, had instructed the younger Andronicus in the rudiments of love; but he had reason to suspect the nocturnal visits of a rival; and a stranger passing through the street was pierced by the arrows of his guards, who were placed in ambush at her door. That stranger was his brother, prince Manuel, who languished and died of his wound; and the emperor Michael, their common father, whose health was in a declining state, expired on the eighth day, lamenting the loss of both his children⁷. However guiltless in his intention, the younger Andronicus might impute a brother's and a father's death to the consequence of his own vices; and deep was the sigh of thinking and feeling men, when they perceived, instead of sorrow and repentance, his ill-dissembled joy on the removal of two odious competitors. By these melancholy events, and the increase of his disorders, the mind of the elder emperor was gradually alienated; and, after many fruitless reproofs, he transferred on another grandson⁸ his hopes and affection. The change was announced by the new oath of allegiance to the reigning sovereign, and the *person* whom he should appoint for his successor; and the acknowledged heir, after a repetition of insults and complaints, was exposed to the indignity of a public trial. Before the sentence, which would probably have condemned him to a

dungeon or a cell, the emperor was informed that the palace courts were filled with the armed followers of his grandson; the judgment was softened to a treaty of reconciliation; and the triumphant escape of the prince encouraged the ardour of the younger faction.

Yet the capital, the clergy, and the senate, adhered to the person, or at least to the government, of the old emperor; and it was only in the provinces, by flight, and revolt, and foreign succour, that the malecontents could hope to vindicate their cause and subvert his throne. The soul of the enterprize was the great domestic John Cantacuzene: the fall from Constantinople is the first date of his actions and memorials; and if his own pen be most descriptive of his patriotism, an unfriendly historian has not refused to celebrate the zeal and ability which he displayed in the service of the young emperor. That prince escaped from the capital under the pretence of hunting; erected his standard at Adrianople; and, in a few days, assembled fifty thousand horse and foot, whom neither honour nor duty could have armed against the Barbarians. Such a force might have saved or commanded the empire; but their counsels were discordant, their motions were slow and doubtful, and their progress was checked by intrigue and negociation. The quarrel of the two Andronici was protracted, and suspended, and renewed, during a ruinous period of seven years. In the first treaty, the relics of the Greek empire were divided: Constantinople, Thessalonica, and the

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Three civil
wars between
the two em-
perors,
A. D. 1321,
April 20—
A. D. 1328,
May 24.

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Coronation
of the
younger An-
dronicus,
A. D. 1325,
February 2.

islands, were left to the elder, while the younger acquired the sovereignty of the greatest part of Thrace, from Philippi to the Byzantine limit. By the second treaty, he stipulated the payment of his troops, his immediate coronation, and an adequate share of the power and revenue of the state. The third civil war was terminated by the surprise of Constantinople, the final retreat of the old emperor, and the sole reign of his victorious grandson. The reasons of this delay may be found in the characters of the men and of the times. When the heir of the monarchy first pleaded his wrongs and his apprehensions, he was heard with pity and applause: and his adherents repeated on all sides the inconsistent promise, that he would increase the pay of the soldiers and alleviate the burthens of the people. The grievances of forty years were mingled in his revolt; and the rising generation was fatigued by the endless prospect of a reign, whose favourites and maxims were of other times. The youth of Andronicus had been without spirit, his age was without reverence: his taxes produced an annual revenue of five hundred thousand pounds; yet the richest of the sovereigns of Christendom was incapable of maintaining three thousand horse and twenty gallies, to resist the destructive progress of the Turks'. "How different," said the younger Andronicus, "is my situation from that of the son of Philip! Alexander might complain, that his father would leave him nothing to conquer: alas! my

“grandfire will leave me nothing to lose.” But the Greeks were soon admonished, that the public disorders could not be healed by a civil war; and that their young favourite was not destined to be the saviour of a falling empire. On the first repulse, his party was broken by his own levity, their intestine discord, and the intrigues of the ancient court, which tempted each male-content to desert or betray the cause of rebellion. Andronicus the younger was touched with remorse, or fatigued with business, or deceived by negotiation: pleasure rather than power was his aim; and the licence of maintaining a thousand hounds, a thousand hawks, and a thousand huntsmen, was sufficient to fuly his fame and disarm his ambition.

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Let us now survey the catastrophe of this busy plot, and the final situation of the principal actors¹⁰. The age of Andronicus was consumed in civil discord; and, amidst the events of war and treaty, his power and reputation continually decayed, till the fatal night in which the gates of the city and palace were opened without resistance to his grandson. His principal commander scorned the repeated warnings of danger; and retiring to rest in the vain security of ignorance, abandoned the feeble monarch, with some priests and pages, to the terrors of a sleepless night. These terrors were quickly realized by the hostile shouts, which proclaimed the titles and victory of Andronicus the younger: and the aged emperor, falling prostrate before an image of the

The elder
Andronicus
abdicates the
government,
A. D. 1328,
May 24.

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Virgin, dispatched a suppliant message to resign the sceptre, and to obtain his life at the hands of the conqueror. The answer of his grandson was decent and pious; at the prayer of his friends, the younger Andronicus assumed the sole administration; but the elder still enjoyed the name and pre-eminence of the first emperor, the use of the great palace, and a pension of twenty-four thousand pieces of gold, one half of which was assigned on the royal treasure, and the other on the fishery of Constantinople. But his impotence was soon exposed to contempt and oblivion; the vast silence of the palace was disturbed only by the cattle and poultry of the neighbourhood, which roved with impunity through the solitary courts; and a reduced allowance of ten thousand pieces of gold¹¹ was all that he could ask, and more than he could hope. His calamities were embittered by the gradual extinction of sight; his confinement was rendered each day more rigorous; and during the absence and sickness of his grandson, his inhuman keepers, by the threats of instant death, compelled him to exchange the purple for the monastic habit and profession. The monk *Antony* had renounced the pomp of the world: yet he had occasion for a coarse fur in the winter season, and as wine was forbidden by his confessor, and water by his physician, the sherbet of Egypt was his common drink. It was not without difficulty that the late emperor could procure three or four pieces to satisfy these simple wants; and if he bestowed the gold to relieve

the more painful distress of a friend, the sacrifice is of some weight in the scale of humanity and religion. Four years after his abdication, Andronicus or Antony expired in a cell, in the seventy-fourth year of his age: and the last strain of adulation could only promise a more splendid crown of glory in heaven, than he had enjoyed upon earth ¹².

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His death,
A. D. 1332.
February 13.

Nor was the reign of the younger, more glorious or fortunate than that of the elder, Andronicus ¹³. He gathered the fruits of ambition; but the taste was transient and bitter: in the supreme station he lost the remains of his early popularity; and the defects of his character became still more conspicuous to the world. The public reproach urged him to march in person against the Turks; nor did his courage fail in the hour of trial; but a defeat and a wound were the only trophies of his expedition in Asia, which confirmed the establishment of the Ottoman monarchy. The abuses of the civil government attained their full maturity and perfection: his neglect of forms, and the confusion of national dresses, are deplored by the Greeks as the fatal symptoms of the decay of the empire. Andronicus was old before his time: the intemperance of youth had accelerated the infirmities of age; and after being rescued from a dangerous malady by nature, or physic, or the Virgin, he was snatched away before he had accomplished his forty-fifth year. He was twice married; and as the progress of the Latins in arms and arts had softened

Reign of Andronicus the younger,
A. D. 1328.
May 24—
A. D. 1341
June 15.

His two
wives.

C H A P. the prejudices of the Byzantine court, his two
 LXIII. wives were chosen in the princely houses of
 Germany and Italy. The first, Agnes at home,
 Irene in Greece, was daughter of the duke of
 Brunswick. Her father¹⁴ was a petty lord¹⁵ in
 the poor and savage regions of the north of
 Germany¹⁶: yet he derived some revenue from
 his silver-mines¹⁷; and his family is celebrated
 by the Greeks as the most ancient and noble of
 the Teutonic name¹⁸. After the death of this
 childless princess, Andronicus sought in marriage
 Jane, the sister of the count of Savoy¹⁹; and his
 suit was preferred to that of the French king²⁰.
 The count respected in his sister the superior
 majesty of a Roman empress: her retinue was com-
 posed of knights and ladies; she was regenerated
 and crowned in St. Sophia, under the more
 orthodox appellation of Anne; and, at the nuptial
 feast, the Greeks and Italians vied with each
 other in the martial exercises of tilts and tour-
 naments.

Reign of
 John Palæo-
 logus,
 A. D. 1341,
 June 15—
 A. D. 1391,

Fortune of
 John Canta-
 cuzenus.

The empress Anne of Savoy survived her hus-
 band: their son, John Palæologus, was left an or-
 phan and an emperor, in the ninth year of his age;
 and his weakness was protected by the first and
 most deserving of the Greeks. The long and cordial
 friendship of his father for John Cantacuzene is
 alike honourable to the prince and the subject.
 It had been formed amidst the pleasures of their
 youth: their families were almost equally noble²¹;
 and the recent lustre of the purple was amply
 compensated by the energy of a private education.

We have seen that the young emperor was saved by Cantacuzene from the power of his grandfather; and, after six years of civil war, the same favourite brought him back in triumph to the palace of Constantinople. Under the reign of Andronicus the younger, the great domestic ruled the emperor and the empire; and it was by his valour and conduct that the isle of Lesbos and the principality of Ætolia were restored to their ancient allegiance. His enemies confess, that, among the public robbers, Cantacuzene alone was moderate and abstemious; and the free and voluntary account which he produces of his own wealth²² may sustain the presumption that it was devolved by inheritance, and not accumulated by rapine. He does not indeed specify the value of his money, plate, and jewels; yet, after a voluntary gift of two hundred vases of silver, after much had been secreted by his friends and plundered by his foes, his forfeit treasures were sufficient for the equipment of a fleet of seventy gallies. He does not measure the size and number of his estates; but his granaries were heaped with an incredible store of wheat and barley; and the labour of a thousand yoke of oxen might cultivate, according to the practice of antiquity, about sixty-two thousand five hundred acres of arable land²³. His pastures were stocked with two thousand five hundred brood mares, two hundred camels, three hundred mules, five hundred asses, five thousand horned cattle, fifty thousand hogs, and seventy thousand

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He is left re-
gent of the
empire.

His regency
is attacked,
A. D. 1341,

by Apocau-
cus ;

sheep²⁴ : a precious record of rural opulence , in the last period of the empire , and in a land , most probably in Thrace , so repeatedly wasted by foreign and domestic hostility. The favour of Cantacuzene was above his fortune. In the moments of familiarity , in the hour of sickness , the emperor was desirous to level the distance between them , and pressed his friend to accept the diadem and purple. The virtue of the great domestic , which is attested by his own pen , resisted the dangerous proposal ; but the last testament of Andronicus the younger named him the guardian of his son , and the regent of the empire.

Had the regent found a suitable return of obedience and gratitude , perhaps he would have acted with pure and zealous fidelity in the service of his pupil²⁵. A guard of five hundred soldiers watched over his person and the palace ; the funeral of the late emperor was decently performed ; the capital was silent and submissive ; and five hundred letters , which Cantacuzene dispatched in the first month , informed the provinces of their loss and their duty. The prospect of a tranquil minority was blasted by the great duke or admiral Apocaucus ; and to exaggerate *his* perfidy , the Imperial historian is pleased to magnify his own imprudence , in raising him to that office against the advice of his more sagacious sovereign. Bold and subtle , rapacious and profuse , the avarice and ambition of Apocaucus were by turns subservient to each other ; and his talents were

were applied to the ruin of his country. His ar- C H A P.
rogance was heightened by the command of a LXIII.
naval force and an impregnable castle, and under
the mask of oaths and flattery he secretly con-
spired against his benefactor. The female court by the em-
of the empress was bribed and directed : he en- press Anne of
couraged Anne of Savoy to assert, by the law Savoy ;
of nature, the tutelage of her son ; the love of
power was disguised by the anxiety of maternal
tendernefs ; and the founder of the Palæologi had
instructed his posterity to dread the example of
a perfidious guardian. The patriarch John of by the pa-
Apri, was a proud and feeble old man, encom- triarch.
passed by a numerous and hungry kindred. He
produced an obsolete epistle of Andronicus, which
bequeathed the prince and people to his pious
care : the fate of his predecessor Arsenius prompted
him to prevent, rather than punish, the crimes
of an usurper ; and Apocaucus smiled at the
success of his own flattery, when he beheld the
Byzantine priest assuming the state and temporal
claims of the Roman pontiff²⁶. Between three
persons so different in their situation and character,
a private league was concluded ; a shadow of
authority was restored to the senate ; and the
people was tempted by the name of freedom. By
this powerful confederacy, the great domestic was
assaulted at first with clandestine, at length with
open, arms. His prerogatives were disputed ;
his opinions slighted ; his friends persecuted ; and
his safety was threatened both in the camp and
city. In his absence on the public service, he

C H A P. LXIII. was accused of treason; proscribed as an enemy of the church and state; and delivered, with all his adherents, to the sword of justice, the vengeance of the people, and the power of the devil: his fortunes were confiscated; his aged mother was cast into prison; all his past services were buried in oblivion; and he was driven by injustice to perpetrate the crime of which he was accused²⁷. From the review of his preceding conduct, Cantacuzene appears to have been guiltless of any treasonable designs; and the only suspicion of his innocence must arise from the vehemence of his protestations, and the sublime purity which he ascribes to his own virtue. While the empress and the patriarch still affected the appearances of harmony, he repeatedly solicited the permission of retiring to a private, and even a monastic, life. After he had been declared a public enemy, it was his fervent wish to throw himself at the feet of the young emperor, and to receive without a murmur the stroke of the executioner; it was not without reluctance that he listened to the voice of reason, which inculcated the sacred duty of saving his family and friends, and proved that he could only save them by drawing the sword and assuming the Imperial title.

Cantacuzene
assumes the
purple,
A. D. 1341,
October 26.

In the strong city of Demotica, his peculiar domain, the emperor John Cantacuzenus was invested with the purple buskins: his right leg was clothed by his noble kinsmen, the left by the Latin chiefs, on whom he conferred the order of knighthood. But even in this act of revolt,

he was still studious of loyalty; and the titles of John Palæologus and Anne of Savoy were proclaimed before his own name and that of his wife Irene. Such vain ceremony is a thin disguise of rebellion, nor are there perhaps any *personal* wrongs that can authorise a subject to take arms against his sovereign: but the want of preparation and success may confirm the assurance of the usurper, that this decisive step was the effect of necessity rather than of choice. Constantinople adhered to the young emperor: the king of Bulgaria was invited to the relief of Adrianople: the principal cities of Thrace and Macedonia, after some hesitation, renounced their obedience to the great domestic; and the leaders of the troops and provinces were induced, by their private interest, to prefer the loose dominion of a woman and a priest. The army of Cantacuzene, in sixteen divisions, was stationed on the banks of the Melas to tempt or intimidate the capital: it was dispersed by treachery or fear; and the officers, more especially the mercenary Latins, accepted the bribes, and embraced the service, of the Byzantine court. After this loss, the rebel emperor (he fluctuated between the two characters) took the road of Thessalonica with a chosen remnant; but he failed in his enterprise on that important place; and he was closely pursued by the great duke, his enemy Apocaucus, at the head of a superior power by sea and land. Driven from the coast, in his march, or rather flight, into the mountains of Servia, Cantacuzene

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CHAP. assembled his troops to scrutinize those who were
 LXIII. worthy and willing to accompany his broken
 fortunes. A base majority bowed and retired;
 and his trusty band was diminished to two thousand,
 and at last to five hundred, volunteers. The *cral*²⁸, or
 despot of the Servians, received him with generous
 hospitality; but the ally was insensibly degraded to
 a suppliant, an hostage, a captive; and, in this
 miserable dependence, he waited at the door of the
 Barbarian, who could dispose of the life and liberty
 of a Roman emperor. The most tempting offers
 could not persuade the *cral* to violate his trust; but
 he soon inclined to the stronger side; and his friend
 was dismissed without injury to a new vicissitude
 of hopes and perils. Near six years the flame of
 discord burnt with various success and unabated
 rage: the cities were distracted by the faction of
 the nobles and the plebeians; the Cantacuzeni
 and Palæologi: and the Bulgarians, the Servians,
 and the Turks, were invoked on both sides as
 the instruments of private ambition and the
 common ruin. The regent deplored the calamities,
 of which he was the author and victim: and his
 own experience might dictate a just and lively
 remark on the different nature of foreign and civil
 war. “The former,” said he, “is the
 “external warmth of summer, always tolerable,
 “and often beneficial; the latter is the deadly
 “heat of a fever, which consumes without a
 “remedy the vitals of the constitution.”

The civil
 war,

A. D.

1341—1347.

The introduction of barbarians and savages into the contests of civilized nations, is a measure pregnant with shame and mischief; which the interest of the moment may compel, but which is reprobated by the best principles of humanity and reason. It is the practice of both sides to accuse their enemies of the guilt of the first alliances; and those who fail in their negotiations, are loudest in their censure of the example which they envy, and would gladly imitate. The Turks of Asia were less barbarous perhaps than the shepherds of Bulgaria and Servia; but their religion rendered them the implacable foes of Rome and Christianity. To acquire the friendship of their emirs, the two factions vied with each other in baseness and profusion: the dexterity of Cantacuzene obtained the preference: but the succour and victory were dearly purchased by the marriage of his daughter with an infidel, the captivity of many thousand Christians, and the passage of the Ottomans into Europe, the last and fatal stroke in the fall of the Roman empire. The inclining scale was decided in his favour by the death of Apocaucus, the just, though singular, retribution of his crimes. A crowd of nobles or plebeians, whom he feared or hated, had been seized by his orders in the capital and the provinces; and the old palace of Constantine was assigned for the place of their confinement. Some alterations in raising the walls, and narrowing the cells, had been ingeniously contrived to prevent their escape, and aggravate

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Victory of
Cantacuzene.

CHAP.
LXIII.

their misery; and the work was incessantly pressed by the daily visits of the tyrant. His guards watched at the gate, and as he stood in the inner-court to overlook the architects, without fear or suspicion, he was assaulted and laid breathless on the ground, by two resolute prisoners of the Palæologian race³⁰, who were armed with sticks and animated by despair. On the rumour of revenge and liberty, the captive multitude broke their fetters, fortified their prison, and exposed from the battlements the tyrant's head, presuming on the favour of the people and the clemency of the empress. Anne of Savoy might rejoice in the fall of an haughty and ambitious minister, but while she delayed to resolve or to act, the populace, more especially the mariners, were excited by the widow of the great duke to a sedition, an assault, and a massacre. The prisoners (of whom the far greater part were guiltless or inglorious of the deed) escaped to a neighbouring church: they were slaughtered at the foot of the altar; and in his death the monster was not less bloody and venomous than in his life. Yet his talents alone upheld the cause of the young emperor; and his surviving associates; suspicious of each other, abandoned the conduct of the war, and rejected the fairest terms of accommodation. In the beginning of the dispute, the empress felt and complained, that she was deceived by the enemies of Cantacuzene: the patriarch was employed to preach against the forgiveness of injuries; and her promise of immortal hatred was sealed by an

oath, under the penalty of excommunication³¹. But Anne soon learned to hate without a teacher: she beheld the misfortunes of the empire with the indifference of a stranger: her jealousy was exasperated by the competition of a rival empress; and on the first symptoms of a more yielding temper, she threatened the patriarch to convene a synod, and degrade him from his office. Their incapacity and discord would have afforded the most decisive advantage; but the civil war was protracted by the weakness of both parties; and the moderation of Cantacuzene has not escaped the reproach of timidity and indolence. He successively recovered the provinces and cities; and the realm of his pupil was measured by the walls of Constantinople; but the metropolis alone counterbalanced the rest of the empire; nor could he attempt that important conquest till he had secured in his favour the public voice and a private correspondence. An Italian, of the name of Facciolati³², had succeeded to the office of great duke: the ships, the guards, and the golden gate, were subject to his command; but his humble ambition was bribed to become the instrument of treachery; and the revolution was accomplished without danger or bloodshed. Destitute of the powers of resistance, or the hope of relief, the inflexible Anne would have still defended the palace, and have smiled to behold the capital in flames, rather than in the possession of a rival. She yielded to the

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He re-enters
Constanti-
nople,
A. D. 1347
January 8.

C H A P. LXIII. prayers of her friends and enemies; and the treaty was dictated by the conqueror, who professed a loyal and zealous attachment to the son of his benefactor. The marriage of his daughter with John Palæologus was at length consummated: the hereditary right of the pupil was acknowledged; but the sole administration during ten years was vested in the guardian. Two emperors and three empresses were seated on the Byzantine throne; and a general amnesty quieted the apprehensions, and confirmed the property, of the most guilty subjects. The festival of the coronation and nuptials was celebrated with the appearances of concord and magnificence, and both were equally fallacious. During the late troubles, the treasures of the state, and even the furniture of the palace, had been alienated or embezzled: the royal banquet was served in pewter or earthen-ware; and such was the proud poverty of the times, that the absence of gold and jewels was supplied by the paltry artifices of glass and gilt-leather³³.

Reign of
John Cantacuzene,
A. D. 1347,
January 8—
A. D. 1355,
January.

I hasten to conclude the personal history of John Cantacuzene³⁴. He triumphed and reigned; but his reign and triumph were clouded by the discontent of his own and the adverse faction. His followers might style the general amnesty, an act of pardon for his enemies, and of oblivion for his friends³⁵: in his cause, their estates had been forfeited or plundered; and as they wandered naked and hungry through the streets, they cursed the selfish generosity of a leader;

who, on the throne of the empire, might relinquish without merit his private inheritance. The adherents of the empress blushed to hold their lives and fortunes by the precarious favour of an usurper; and the thirst of revenge was concealed by a tender concern for the succession, and even the safety, of her son. They were justly alarmed by a petition of the friends of Cantacuzene, that they might be released from their oath of allegiance to the Palæologi; and entrusted with the defence of some cautionary towns; a measure supported with argument and eloquence; and which was rejected (says the Imperial historian) “by my sublime, and almost incredible, virtue.” His repose was disturbed by the sound of plots and seditions; and he trembled, lest the lawful prince should be stolen away by some foreign or domestic enemy, who would inscribe his name and his wrongs in the banners of rebellion. As the son of Andronicus advanced in the years of manhood, he began to feel and to act for himself; and his rising ambition was rather stimulated than checked by the imitation of his father’s vices. If we may trust his own professions, Cantacuzene laboured with honest industry to correct these sordid and sensual appetites, and to raise the mind of the young prince to a level with his fortune. In the Servian expedition, the two emperors shewed themselves in cordial harmony to the troops and provinces; and the younger colleague was initiated by the elder in the mysteries of war and government. After the conclusion

C H A P. of the peace, Palæologus was left at Theſſalo-
 LXIII. nica, a royal reſidence, and a frontier ſtation,
 to ſecure by his abſence the peace of Conſtantino-
 ple, and to withdraw his youth from the tempta-
 tions of a luxurious capital. But the diſtance weak-
 ened the powers of control, and the ſon of
 Andronicus was ſurrounded with artful or un-
 thinking companions, who taught him to hate
 his guardian, to deplore his exile, and to vin-
 dicate, his rights. A private treaty with the
 cruel or deſpot of Servia, was ſoon followed by
 an open revolt; and Cantacuzene, on the throne
 of the elder Andronicus, defended the cauſe of
 age and prerogative, which in his youth he had
 ſo vigorously attacked. At his requeſt, the em-
 preſs mother undertook the voyage of Theſſalo-
 nica, and the office of mediation: ſhe returned
 without ſucceſs; and unleſs Anne of Savoy was
 inſtructed by adverſity, we may doubt the ſin-
 cerity, or at leaſt the fervour, of her zeal. While
 the regent grasped the ſceptre with a firm and
 vigorous hand, ſhe had been inſtructed to de-
 clare, that the ten years of his legal adminiſtration
 would ſoon elapſe; and that after a full trial of
 the vanity of the world, the emperor Canta-
 cuzene ſighed for the repoſe of a cloyſter, and
 was ambitious only of an heavenly crown. Had
 theſe ſentiments been genuine, his voluntary ab-
 dication would have reſtored the peace of the
 empire, and his conſcience would have been re-
 lieved by an act of juſtice. Palæologus alone
 was reſponſible for his future government; and

whatever might be his vices, they were surely less formidable than the calamities of a civil war, in which the Barbarians and infidels were again invited to assist the Greeks in their mutual destruction. By the arms of the Turks, who now struck a deep and everlasting root in Europe, Cantacuzene prevailed in the third contest in which he had been involved; and the young emperor, driven from the sea and land, was compelled to take shelter among the Latins of the isle of Tenedos. His insolence and obstinacy provoked the victor to a step which must render the quarrel irreconcilable: and the association of his son Matthew, whom he invested with the purple, established the succession in the family of the Cantacuzeni. But Constantinople was still attached to the blood of her ancient princes: and this last injury accelerated the restoration of the rightful heir. A noble Genoese espoused the cause of Palæologus, obtained a promise of his sister, and achieved the revolution with two galleys and two thousand five hundred auxiliaries. Under the pretence of distress, they were admitted into the lesser port; a gate was opened, and the Latin shout of, "long life and victory to the emperor, John Palæologus!" was answered by a general rising in his favour. A numerous and loyal party yet adhered to the standard of Cantacuzene: but he asserts in his history (does he hope for belief?) that his tender conscience rejected the assurance of conquest; that, in free obedience to the voice of religion and philosophy,

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John Palæologus takes up arms against him, A. D. 1353.

C H A P.
LXIII.
Abdication
of Cantacu-
zene,
A. D. 1355,
January.

he descended from the throne, and embraced with pleasure the monastic habit and profession³⁶. So soon as he ceased to be a prince, his successor was not unwilling that he should be a saint: the remainder of his life was devoted to piety and learning; in the cells of Constantinople and mount Athos, the monk Joasaph was respected as the temporal and spiritual father of the emperor; and if he issued from his retreat, it was as the minister of peace, to subdue the obstinacy, and solicit the pardon, of his rebellious son³⁷.

Dispute con-
cerning the
light of
mount Tha-
bor,
A. D.
1341—1351.

Yet in the cloyster, the mind of Cantacuzene was still exercised by theological war. He sharpened a controversial pen against the Jews and Mahometans³⁸; and in every state, he defended with equal zeal the divine light of mount Thabor, a memorable question which consummates the religious follies of the Greeks. The fakirs of India³⁹, and the monks of the Oriental church, were alike persuaded, that, in total abstraction of the faculties of the mind and body, the purer spirit may ascend to the enjoyment and vision of the Deity. The opinion and practice of the monasteries of mount Athos⁴⁰ will be best represented in the words of an abbot, who flourished in the eleventh century. "When thou art alone
" in thy cell," says the ascetic teacher, "shut
" thy door, and seat thyself in a corner; raise
" thy mind above all things vain and transitory;
" recline thy beard and chin on thy breast; turn
" thy eyes and thy thought towards the middle
" of thy belly, the region of the navel; and

“ search the place of the heart, the seat of the C H A P.
 “ soul. At first, all will be dark and comfortless; LXIII.
 “ but if you persevere day and night, you will
 “ feel an ineffable joy; and no sooner has the
 “ soul discovered the place of the heart, than it
 “ is involved in a mystic and ethereal light.” This
 light, the production of a distempered fancy, the
 creature of an empty stomach and an empty brain,
 was adored by the Quietists as the pure and per-
 fect essence of God himself; and as long as the
 folly was confined to mount Athos, the simple
 solitaries were not inquisitive how the divine es-
 sence could be a *material* substance, or how an
immaterial substance could be perceived by the
 eyes of the body. But in the reign of the younger
 Andronicus, these monasteries were visited by
 Barlaam “, a Calabrian monk, who was equally
 skilled in philosophy and theology; who possessed
 the languages of the Greeks and Latins; and
 whose versatile genius could maintain their op-
 posite creeds, according to the interest of the
 moment. The indiscretion of an ascetic revealed
 to the curious traveller the secrets of mental
 prayer; and Barlaam embraced the opportunity
 of ridiculing the Quietists, who placed the soul
 in the navel; of accusing the monks of mount
 Athos of heresy and blasphemy. His attack com-
 pelled the more learned to renounce or dissemble
 the simple devotion of their brethren; and Gre-
 gory Palamas introduced a scholastic distinction
 between the essence and operation of God. His
 inaccessible essence dwells in the midst of an

C H A P. uncreated and eternal light; and this beatific vision
 LXIII. of the saints had been manifested to the disciples on mount Thabor, in the trans-figuration of Christ. Yet this distinction could not escape the reproach of polytheism; the eternity of the light of Thabor was fiercely denied; and Barlaam still charged the Palamites with holding two eternal substances, a visible and an invisible God. From the rage of the monks of mount Athos, who threatened his life, the Calabrian retired to Constantinople, where his smooth and specious manners introduced him to the favour of the great domestic and the emperor. The court and the city were involved in this theological dispute, which flamed amidst the civil war; but the doctrine of Barlaam was disgraced by his flight and apostacy: the Palamites triumphed; and their adversary, the patriarch John of Apri, was deposed by the consent of the adverse factions of the state. In the character of emperor and theologian, Cantacuzene presided in the synod of the Greek church, which established, as an article of faith, the uncreated light of mount Thabor; and, after so many insults, the reason of mankind was slightly wounded by the addition of a single absurdity. Many rolls of paper or parchment have been blotted; and the impenitent sectaries, who refused to subscribe the orthodox creed, were deprived of the honours of Christian burial: but in the next age the question was forgotten; nor can I learn that the axe or the faggot were employed for the extirpation of the Barlaamite heresy ⁴².

For the conclusion of this chapter, I have reserved the Genoese war, which shook the throne of Cantacuzene, and betrayed the debility of the Greek empire. The Genoese, who, after the recovery of Constantinople, were seated in the suburb of Pera or Galata, received that honourable fief from the bounty of the emperor. They were indulged in the use of their laws and magistrates; but they submitted to the duties of vassals and subjects: the forcible word of *liegemen*⁴³ was borrowed from the Latin jurisprudence; and their *podesta*, or chief, before he entered on his office, saluted the emperor with loyal acclamations and vows of fidelity. Genoa sealed a firm alliance with the Greeks; and, in case of a defensive war, a supply of fifty empty gallies, and a succour of fifty gallies completely armed and manned, was promised by the republic to the empire. In the revival of a naval force, it was the aim of Michael Palæologus to deliver himself from a foreign aid; and his vigorous government contained the Genoese of Galata within those limits which the insolence of wealth and freedom provoked them to exceed. A sailor threatened that they should soon be masters of Constantinople, and slew the Greek who resented this national affront; and an armed vessel, after refusing to salute the palace, was guilty of some acts of piracy in the Black Sea. Their countrymen threatened to support their cause; but the long and open village of Galata was instantly surrounded by the Imperial troops; till, in the moment

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Establishment of the Genoese at Pera or Galata,

A. D.

1291—1347.

C H A P. of the assault, the prostrate Genoese implored
 LXIII. the clemency of their sovereign. The defenceless
 situation which secured their obedience, exposed
 them to the attack of their Venetian rivals, who
 in the reign of the elder Andronicus, presumed
 to violate the majesty of the throne. On the
 approach of their fleets, the Genoese, with their
 families and effects, retired into the city: their
 empty habitations were reduced to ashes; and
 the feeble prince, who had viewed the destruc-
 tion of his suburb, expressed his resentment, not
 by arms, but by ambassadors. This misfortune,
 however, was advantageous to the Genoese,
 who obtained, and imperceptibly abused, the
 dangerous licence of surrounding Galata with a
 strong wall; of introducing into the ditch the
 waters of the sea; of erecting lofty turrets; and
 of mounting a train of military engines on the
 rampart. The narrow bounds in which they had
 been circumscribed, were insufficient for the
 growing colony; each day they acquired some
 addition of landed property; and the adjacent
 hills were covered with their villas and castles,
 which they joined and protected by new fortifi-
 cations^{**}. The navigation and trade of the Euxine
 was the patrimony of the Greek emperors, who
 commanded the narrow entrance, the gates, as
 it were, of that inland sea. In the reign of
 Michael Palæologus, their prerogative was ac-
 knowledged by the sultan of Egypt, who solicited
 and obtained the liberty of sending an annual
 ship for the purchase of slaves in Circassia and
 the

the Lesser Tartary; a liberty pregnant with mischief to the Christian cause; since these youths were transformed by education and discipline into the formidable Mamalukes⁴⁵. From the colony of Pera, the Genoese engaged with superior advantage in the lucrative trade of the Black Sea; and their industry supplied the Greeks with fish and corn; two articles of food almost equally important to a superstitious people. The spontaneous bounty of nature appears to have bestowed the harvests of the Ukraine, the produce of a rude and savage husbandry; and the endless exportation of salt fish and caviar is annually renewed by the enormous sturgeons that are caught at the mouth of the Don or Tanais, in their last station of the rich mud and shallow water of the Mæotis⁴⁶. The waters of the Oxus, the Caspian, the Volga, and the Don, opened a rare and laborious passage for the gems and spices of India; and, after three months march, the caravans of Carizme met the Italian vessels in the harbours of Crimæa⁴⁷. These various branches of trade were monopolized by the diligence and power of the Genoese. Their rivals of Venice and Pisa were forcibly expelled; the natives were awed by the castles and cities, which arose on the foundations of their humble factories; and their principal establishment of Caffa⁴⁸ was besieged without effect by the Tartar powers. Destitute of a navy, the Greeks were oppressed by these haughty merchants, who fed, or famished, Constantinople, according to their

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Their trade
and info-
lence.

C H A P. interest. They proceeded to usurp the customs,
 LXIII. the fishery, and even the toll, of the Bosphorus;
 and while they derived from these objects a revenue of two hundred thousand pieces of gold, a remnant of thirty thousand was reluctantly allowed to the emperor⁴⁹. The colony of Pera or Galata acted, in peace and war, as an independent state; and, as it will happen in distant settlements, the Genoese podesta too often forgot that he was the servant of his own masters.

Their war
 with the emperor Cantacuzene,
 A. D. 1348.

These usurpations were encouraged by the weakness of the elder Andronicus, and by the civil wars that afflicted his age and the minority of his grandson. The talents of Cantacuzene were employed to the ruin, rather than the restoration, of the empire; and after his domestic victory, he was condemned to an ignominious trial, whether the Greeks or the Genoese should reign in Constantinople. The merchants of Pera were offended by his refusal of some contiguous lands, some commanding heights, which they proposed to cover with new fortifications; and in the absence of the emperor, who was detained at Demotica by sickness, they ventured to brave the debility of a female reign. A Byzantine vessel, which had presumed to fish at the mouth of the harbour, was sunk by these audacious strangers; the fishermen were murdered. Instead of suing for pardon, the Genoese demanded satisfaction; required in an haughty strain, that the Greeks should renounce the exercise of navigation; and encountered with regular arms the first sallies

of the popular indignation. They instantly occupied the debateable land; and by the labour of a whole people, of either sex and of every age, the wall was raised, and the ditch was sunk, with incredible speed. At the same time, they attacked and burnt two Byzantine gallies; while the three others, the remainder of the Imperial navy, escaped from their hands: the habitations without the gates, or along the shore, were pillaged and destroyed; and the care of the regent, of the empress Irene, was confined to the preservation of the city. The return of Cantacuzene dispelled the public consternation: the emperor inclined to peaceful counsels; but he yielded to the obstinacy of his enemies, who rejected all reasonable terms, and to the ardour of his subjects, who threatened, in the style of scripture, to break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Yet they reluctantly paid the taxes, that he imposed for the construction of ships, and the expences of the war; and as the two nations were masters, the one of the land, the other of the sea, Constantinople and Pera were pressed by the evils of a mutual siege. The merchants of the colony, who had believed that a few days would terminate the war, already murmured at their losses; the succours from their mother-country were delayed by the factions of Genoa; and the most cautious embraced the opportunity of a Rhodian vessel to remove their families and effects from the scene of hostility. In the spring, the Byzantine fleet, seven gallies and

Destruction
of his fleet.
A. D. 1349.

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a train of smaller vessels, issued from the mouth of the harbour, and steered in a single line along the shore of Pera; unskilfully presenting their sides to the beaks of the adverse squadron. The crews were composed of peasants and mechanics; nor was their ignorance compensated by the native courage of Barbarians: the wind was strong, the waves were rough; and no sooner did the Greeks perceive a distant and inactive enemy, than they leaped headlong into the sea, from a doubtful, to an inevitable, peril. The troops that marched to the attack of the lines of Pera were struck at the same moment with a similar panic; and the Genoese were astonished, and almost ashamed, at their double victory. Their triumphant vessels, crowned with flowers, and dragging after them the captive gallies, repeatedly passed and repassed before the palace: the only virtue of the emperor was patience; and the hope of revenge his sole consolation. Yet the distress of both parties interposed a temporary agreement; and the shame of the empire was disguised by a thin veil of dignity and power. Summoning the chiefs of the colony, Cantacuzene affected to despise the trivial object of the debate; and, after a mild reproof, most liberally granted the lands, which had been previously resigned to the seeming custody of his officers⁵⁰.

Victory of
the Genoese
over the Ve-
netians and
Greeks,

But the emperor was soon solicited to violate the treaty, and to join his arms with the Venetians, the perpetual enemies of Genoa and her colonies. While he compared the reasons of

peace and war, his moderation was provoked by a wanton insult of the inhabitants of Pera, who discharged from their rampart a large stone that fell in the midst of Constantinople. On his just complaint, they coldly blamed the imprudence of their engineer; but the next day the insult was repeated, and they exulted in a second proof that the royal city was not beyond the reach of their artillery. Cantacuzene instantly signed his treaty with the Venetians; but the weight of the Roman empire was scarcely felt in the balance of these opulent and powerful republics¹. From the streights of Gibraltar to the mouth of the Tanais, their fleets encountered each other with various success; and a memorable battle was fought in the narrow sea, under the walls of Constantinople. It would not be an easy task to reconcile the accounts of the Greeks, the Venetians, and the Genoese²; and while I depend on the narrative of an impartial historian³, I shall borrow from each nation the facts that redound to their own disgrace, and the honour of their foes. The Venetians, with their allies the Catalans, had the advantage of number; and their fleet, with the poor addition of eight Byzantine gallies, amounted to seventy-five sail: the Genoese did not exceed sixty-four; but in those times their ships of war were distinguished by the superiority of their size and strength. The names and families of their naval commanders, Pisani and Doria, are illustrious in the annals of their country; but the personal merit of the

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LXIII.

A D 1352,
February 13.

C H A P. former was eclipsed by the fame and abilities of
 LXIII. his rival. They engaged in tempestuous weather; and the tumultuary conflict was continued from the dawn to the extinction of light. The enemies of the Genoese applaud their prowess; the friends of the Venetians are dissatisfied with their behaviour; but all parties agree in praising the skill and boldness of the Catalans, who, with many wounds, sustained the brunt of the action. On the separation of the fleets, the event might appear doubtful; but the thirteen Genoese galleys, that had been sunk or taken, were compensated by a double loss of the allies; of fourteen Venetians, ten Catalans, and two Greeks; and even the grief of the conquerors expressed the assurance and habit of more decisive victories. Pisani confessed his defeat, by retiring into a fortified harbour, from whence, under the pretext of the orders of the senate, he steered with a broken and flying squadron for the isle of Candia, and abandoned to his rivals the sovereignty of the sea. In a public epistle⁵⁴, addressed to the doge and senate, Petrarch employs his eloquence to reconcile the maritime powers, the two luminaries of Italy. The orator celebrates the valour and victory of the Genoese, the first of men in the exercise of naval war: he drops a tear on the misfortunes of their Venetian brethren; but he exhorts them to pursue with fire and sword the base and perfidious Greeks; to purge the metropolis of the East from the heresy with which it was infected.

Deserted by their friends, the Greeks were incapable of resistance; and three months after the battle, the emperor Cantacuzene solicited and subscribed a treaty, which for ever banished the Venetians and Catalans, and granted to the Genoese a monopoly of trade, and almost a right of dominion. The Roman empire (I smile in transcribing the name) might soon have sunk into a province of Genoa, if the ambition of the republic had not been checked by the ruin of her freedom and naval power. A long contest of one hundred and thirty years was determined by the triumph of Venice; and the factions of the Genoese compelled them to seek for domestic peace under the protection of a foreign lord, the duke of Milan, or the French king. Yet the spirit of commerce survived that of conquest; and the colony of Pera still awed the capital and navigated the Euxine, till it was involved by the Turks in the final servitude of Constantinople itself.

CHAP
LXIII.

Their treaty
with the em-
pire,
May 6.

C H A P. LXIV.

Conquests of Zingis Khan and the Moguls from China to Poland. — Escape of Constantinople and the Greeks. — Origin of the Ottoman Turks in Bithynia. — Reigns and Victories of Othman, Orchan, Amurath the First, and Bajazet the First. — Foundation and Progress of the Turkish Monarchy in Asia and Europe. — Danger of Constantinople and the Greek Empire.

C H A P.
LXIV.

FROM the petty quarrels of a city and her suburbs, from the cowardice and discord of the falling Greeks, I shall now ascend to the victorious Turks; whose domestic slavery was ennobled by martial discipline, religious enthusiasm, and the energy of the national character. The rise and progress of the Ottomans, the present sovereigns of Constantinople, are connected with the most important scenes of modern history: but they are founded on a previous knowledge of the great eruption of the Moguls and Tartars; whose rapid conquests may be compared with the primitive convulsions of nature, which have agitated and altered the surface of the globe. I have long since asserted my claim to introduce the nations, the immediate or remote authors of the fall of the Roman empire; nor can I refuse

myself to those events, which, from their uncommon magnitude, will interest a philosophic mind in the history of blood^r.

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LXIV.

From the spacious highlands between China, Siberia, and the Caspian Sea, the tide of emigration and war has repeatedly been poured. These ancient seats of the Huns and Turks were occupied in the twelfth century by many pastoral tribes, of the same descent and similar manners, which were united and led to conquest by the formidable Zingis. In his ascent to greatness, that Barbarian (whose private appellation was Temugin) had trampled on the necks of his equals. His birth was noble: but it was in the pride of victory, that the prince or people deduced his seventh ancestor from the immaculate conception of a virgin. His father had reigned over thirteen hords, which composed about thirty or forty thousand families: above two-thirds refused to pay tithes or obedience to his infant son; and at the age of thirteen, Temugin fought a battle against his rebellious subjects. The future conqueror of Asia was reduced to fly and to obey: but he rose superior to his fortune, and in his fortieth year he had established his fame and dominion over the circumjacent tribes. In a state of society, in which policy is rude and valour is universal, the ascendant of one man must be founded on his power and resolution to punish his enemies and recompense his friends. His first military league was ratified by the simple rites of sacrificing an horse and tasting of a running

Zingis Khan,
first emperor
of the Mo-
guls and
Tartars,
A. D.
1206—1227.

CHAP.
LXIV.

stream: Temugin pledged himself to divide with his followers the sweets and the bitters of life; and, when he had shared among them his horses and apparel, he was rich in their gratitude and his own hopes. After his first victory, he placed seventy chaldrons on the fire, and seventy of the most guilty rebels were cast headlong into the boiling water. The sphere of his attraction was continually enlarged by the ruin of the proud and the submission of the prudent; and the boldest chieftains might tremble, when they beheld, enchased in silver, the skull of the khan of the Keraites²; who, under the name of Prester John, had corresponded with the Roman pontiff and the princes of Europe. The ambition of Temugin condescended to employ the arts of superstition; and it was from a naked prophet, who could ascend to heaven on a white horse, that he accepted the title of Zingis³, the *most great*; and a divine right to the conquest and dominion of the earth. In a general *couroultai*, or diet, he was seated on a felt, which was long afterwards revered as a relic, and solemnly proclaimed great khan, or emperor, of the Moguls⁴ and Tartars⁵. Of these kindred, though rival, names, the former had given birth to the Imperial race; and the latter has been extended, by accident or error, over the spacious wilderness of the north.

His laws.

The code of laws which Zingis dictated to his subjects, was adapted to the preservation of domestic peace, and the exercise of foreign hostility. The punishment of death was inflicted on

the crimes of adultery, murder, perjury, and the capital thefts of an horse or ox; and the fiercest of men were mild and just in their intercourse with each other. The future election of the great khan was vested in the princes of his family and the heads of the tribes; and the regulations of the chace were essential to the pleasures and plenty of a Tartar camp. The victorious nation was held sacred from all servile labours, which were abandoned to slaves and strangers; and every labour was servile except the profession of arms. The service and discipline of the troops, who were armed with bows, scymetars, and iron maces, and divided by hundreds, thousands, and ten thousands, were the institutions of a veteran commander. Each officer and soldier was made responsible, under pain of death, for the safety and honour of his companions; and the spirit of conquest breathed in the law, that peace should never be granted unless to a vanquished and suppliant enemy. But it is the religion of Zingis that best deserves our wonder and applause. The Catholic inquisitors of Europe, who defended nonsense by cruelty, might have been confounded by the example of a Barbarian, who anticipated the lessons of philosophy, and established by his laws a system of pure theism and perfect toleration. His first and only article of faith was the existence of one God, the author of all good; who fills by his presence the heavens and earth, which he has created by his power. The Tartars and Moguls were addicted to the idols of their

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peculiar tribes; and many of them had been converted by the foreign missionaries to the religions of Moses, of Mahomet, and of Christ. These various systems in freedom and concord, were taught and practised within the precincts of the same camp; and the Bonze, the Imam, the Rabbi, the Nestorian and the Latin priest, enjoyed the same honourable exemption from service and tribute: in the mosch of Bochara, the insolent victor might trample the koran under his horses feet, but the calm legislator respected the prophets and pontiffs of the most hostile sects. The reason of Zingis was not informed by books; the khan could neither read nor write; and, except the tribe of the Igours, the greatest part of the Moguls and Tartars were as illiterate as their sovereign. The memory of their exploits was preserved by tradition: sixty-eight years after the death of Zingis, these traditions were collected and transcribed⁷; the brevity of their domestic annals may be supplied by the Chinese⁸, Persians⁹, Armenians¹⁰, Syrians¹¹, Arabians¹², Greeks¹³, Russians¹⁴, Poles¹⁵, Hungarians¹⁶, and Latins¹⁷; and each nation will deserve credit in the relation of their own disasters and defeats¹⁸.

His invasion
of China,
A. D.

1210—1214.

The arms of Zingis and his lieutenants successively reduced the hords of the desert, who pitched their tents between the wall of China and the Volga; and the Mogul emperor became the monarch of the pastoral world, the lord of many millions of shepherds and soldiers, who felt their united strength, and were impatient to rush on

the mild and wealthy climates of the South. His ancestors had been the tributaries of the Chinese emperors; and Temugin himself had been disgraced by a title of honour and servitude. The court of Pekin was astonished by an embassy from its former vassal, who, in the tone of the king of nations, exacted the tribute and obedience which he had paid, and who affected to treat the *son of heaven* as the most contemptible of mankind. An haughty answer disguised their secret apprehensions; and their fears were soon justified by the march of innumerable squadrons, who pierced on all sides the feeble rampart of the great wall. Ninety cities were stormed, or starved, by the Moguls; ten only escaped; and Zingis, from a knowledge of the filial piety of the Chinese, covered his vanguard with their captive parents; an unworthy, and by degrees a fruitless, abuse of the virtue of his enemies. His invasion was supported by the revolt of an hundred thousand Khitans, who guarded the frontier: yet he listened to a treaty; and a princess of China, three thousand horses, five hundred youths and as many virgins, and a tribute of gold and silk, were the price of his retreat. In his second expedition, he compelled the Chinese emperor to retire beyond the yellow river to a more southern residence. The siege of Pekin¹⁹ was long and laborious: the inhabitants were reduced by famine to decimate and devour their fellow-citizens; when their ammunition was spent, they discharged ingots of gold and

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silver from their engines; but the Moguls introduced a mine to the centre of the capital; and the conflagration of the palace burnt above thirty days. China was desolated by Tartar war and domestic faction; and the five northern provinces were added to the empire of Zingis.

of Carizme,
Transoxiana,
and Persia,
A. D.
1218—1224.

In the West, he touched the dominions of Mohammed sultan of Carizme, who reigned from the Persian Gulf to the borders of India and Turkestan; and who, in the proud imitation of Alexander the Great, forgot the servitude and ingratitude of his fathers to the house of Seljuk. It was the wish of Zingis to establish a friendly and commercial intercourse with the most powerful of the Moslem princes; nor could he be tempted by the secret sollicitations of the caliph of Bagdad, who sacrificed to his personal wrongs the safety of the church and state. A rash and inhuman deed provoked and justified the Tartar arms in the invasion of the southern Asia. A caravan of three ambassadors and one hundred and fifty merchants, was arrested and murdered at Otrar, by the command of Mohammed; nor was it till after a demand and denial of justice, till he had prayed and fasted three nights on a mountain, that the Mogul emperor appealed to the judgment of God and his sword. Our European battles, says a philosophic writer²⁰, are petty skirmishes, if compared to the numbers that have fought and fallen in the fields of Asia. Seven hundred thousand Moguls and Tartars are said to have marched under the standard of Zingis

and his four sons. In the vast plains that extend to the north of the Sihon or Jaxartes, they were encountered by four hundred thousand soldiers of the sultan; and in the first battle, which was suspended by the night, one hundred and sixty thousand Carizmians were slain. Mohammed was astonished by the multitude and valour of his enemies: he withdrew from the scene of danger, and distributed his troops in the frontier towns, trusting that the Barbarians, invincible in the field, would be repulsed by the length and difficulty of so many regular sieges. But the prudence of Zingis had formed a body of Chinese engineers, skilled in the mechanic arts, informed perhaps of the secret of gunpowder, and capable, under his discipline, of attacking a foreign country with more vigour and success than they had defended their own. The Persian historians will relate the sieges and reduction of Otrar, Cogende, Bochara, Samarcand, Carizme, Herat, Merou, Nisabour, Balch, and Candahar; and the conquest of the rich and populous countries of Transoxiana, Carizme, and Chorasan. The destructive hostilities of Attila and the Huns have long since been elucidated by the example of Zingis and the Moguls; and in this more proper place I shall be content to observe, that, from the Caspian to the Indus, they ruined a tract of many hundred miles, which was adorned with the habitations and labours of mankind, and that five centuries have not been sufficient to repair the ravages of four years. The Mogul emperor encouraged or

C H A P. indulged the fury of his troops: the hope of
 LXIV. future possession was lost in the ardour of rapine
 and slaughter; and the cause of the war exasper-
 ated their native fierceness by the pretence of
 justice and revenge. The downfall and death of
 the sultan Mohammed, who expired unpitied
 and alone, in a desert island of the Caspian Sea,
 is a poor atonement for the calamities of which
 he was the author. Could the Carizmian em-
 pire have been saved by a single hero, it would
 have been saved by his son Gelaleddin, whose
 active valour repeatedly checked the Moguls in
 the career of victory. Retreating, as he fought,
 to the banks of the Indus, he was oppressed by
 their innumerable host, till, in the last moment
 of despair, Gelaleddin spurred his horse into the
 waves, swam one of the broadest and most ra-
 pid rivers of Asia, and extorted the admiration
 and applause of Zingis himself. It was in this
 camp that the Mogul conqueror yielded with
 reluctance to the murmurs of his weary and
 wealthy troops, who sighed for the enjoyment of
 their native land. Incumbered with the spoils of
 Asia, he slowly measured back his footsteps,
 betrayed some pity for the misery of the van-
 quished, and declared his intention of rebuilding
 the cities which had been swept away by the
 tempest of his arms. After he had repassed the
 Oxus and Jaxartes, he was joined by two gene-
 rals, whom he had detached with thirty thou-
 sand horse, to subdue the western provinces of
 Persia. They had trampled on the nations which
 opposed

opposed their passage, penetrated through the gates of Derbend, traversed the Volga and the Desert, and accomplished the circuit of the Caspian Sea, by an expedition which had never been attempted, and has never been repeated. The return of Zingis was signalized by the overthrow of the rebellious or independent kingdoms of Tartary; and he died in the fulness of years and glory, with his last breath exhorting and instructing his sons to atchieve the conquest of the Chinese empire.

The haram of Zingis was composed of five hundred wives and concubines; and of his numerous progeny, four sons, illustrious by their birth and merit, exercised under their father the principal offices of peace and war. Tushhi was his great huntsman, Zagatai²¹ his judge, Octai his minister, and Tuli his general; and their names and actions are often conspicuous in the history of his conquests. Firmly united for their own and the public interest, the three brothers and their families were content with dependent sceptres; and Octai, by general consent, was proclaimed great khan, or emperor of the Moguls and Tartars. He was succeeded by his son Gayuk, after whose death the empire devolved to his cousins Mangou and Cublai, the sons of Tuli, and the grandsons of Zingis. In the sixty-eight years of his four first successors, the Moguls subdued almost all Asia, and a large portion of Europe. Without confining myself to the order of time, without expatiating on the detail of

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His death,
A. D. 1227.

Conquests of
the Moguls
under the
successors of
Zingis.

C H A P. events, I shall present a general picture of the
 LXIV. progress of their arms; I. In the East; II. In
 the South; III. In the West; and IV. In the
 North.

Of the north-
 ern empire of
 China,
 A. D. 1234.

I. Before the invasion of Zingis, China was divided into two empires or dynasties of the North and South²²; and the difference of origin and interest was smoothed by a general conformity of laws, - language, and national manners. The Northern empire, which had been dismembered by Zingis, was finally subdued seven years after his death. After the loss of Peking, the emperor had fixed his residence at Kaifong, a city many leagues in circumference, and which contained, according to the Chinese annals, fourteen hundred thousand families of inhabitants and fugitives. He escaped from thence with only seven horsemen, and made his last stand in a third capital, till at length the hopeless monarch, protesting his innocence and accusing his fortune, ascended a funeral pile, and gave orders, that, as soon as he had stabbed himself, the fire should be kindled by his attendants. The dynasty of the *Song*, the native and ancient sovereigns of the whole empire, survived about forty-five years the fall of the northern usurpers; and the perfect conquest was reserved for the arms of Cublai. During this interval, the Moguls were often diverted by foreign wars; and, if the Chinese seldom dared to meet their victors in the field, their passive courage presented an endless succession of cities to storm and of millions to slaughter. In the attack

and defence of places, the engines of antiquity and the Greek fire were alternately employed: the use of gunpowder in cannon and bombs appears as a familiar practice²³; and the sieges were conducted by the Mahometans and Franks, who had been liberally invited into the service of Cublai. After passing the great river, the troops and artillery were conveyed along a series of canals, till they invested the royal residence of Hamcheu, or Quinsay, in the country of silk, the most delicious climate of China. The emperor, a defenceless youth, surrendered his person and sceptre; and before he was sent in exile into Tartary he struck nine times the ground with his forehead, to adore in prayer or thanksgiving the mercy of the great khan. Yet the war (it was now styled a rebellion) was still maintained in the southern provinces from Hamcheu to Canton; and the obstinate remnant of independence and hostility was transported from the land to the sea. But when the fleet of the *Song* was surrounded and oppressed by a superior armament, their last champion leaped into the waves with his infant emperor in his arms. "It is more glorious," he cried, "to die a prince, than to live a slave." An hundred thousand Chinese imitated his example; and the whole empire, from Tonkin to the great wall, submitted to the dominion of Cublai. His boundless ambition aspired to the confines of Japan: his fleet was twice shipwrecked; and the lives of an hundred thousand Moguls and Chinese were

Of the southern,
A. D. 1279.

CHAP. sacrificed in the fruitless expedition. But the
 LXIV. circumjacent kingdoms, Corea, Tonkin, Cochinchina, Pegu, Bengal, and Thibet, were reduced in different degrees of tribute and obedience by the effort or terror of his arms. He explored the Indian ocean with a fleet of a thousand ships: they sailed in sixty-eight days, most probably to the isle of Borneo, under the equinoctial line; and though they returned not without spoil or glory, the emperor was dissatisfied that the savage king had escaped from their hands.

Of Persia, and
 the empire of
 the Caliphs,
 A. D. 1258.

II. The conquest of Hindostan by the Moguls, was reserved in a later period for the house of Timour; but that of Iran, or Persia, was atchieved by Holagou Khan, the grandson of Zingis, the brother and lieutenant of the two successive emperors, Mangou and Cublai. I shall not enumerate the crowd of sultans, emirs, and atabeks, whom he trampled into dust: but the extirpation of the *Assassins*, or Ismaelians²⁴ of Persia, may be considered as a service to mankind. Among the hills to the south of the Caspian, these odious sectaries had reigned with impunity above an hundred and sixty years; and their prince, or Imam, established his lieutenant to lead and govern the colony of mount Libanus, so famous and formidable in the history of the crusades²⁵. With the fanaticism of the Koran, the Ismaelians had blended the Indian transmigration, and the visions of their own prophets: and it was their first duty to devote their souls and bodies in blind obedience to the vicar of God. The daggers of his

missionaries were felt both in the East and West: the Christians and the Moslems enumerate, and perhaps multiply, the illustrious victims that were sacrificed to the zeal, avarice, or resentment of *the old man* (as he was corruptly styled) of *the mountain*. But these daggers, his only arms, were broken by the sword of Holagou, and not a vestige is left of the enemies of mankind, except the word *assassin*, which, in the most odious sense, has been adopted in the languages of Europe. The extinction of the Abbassides cannot be indifferent to the spectators of their greatness and decline. Since the fall of their Seljukian tyrants, the caliphs had recovered their lawful dominion of Bagdad and the Arabian Irak; but the city was distracted by theological factions, and the commander of the faithful was lost in a haram of seven hundred concubines. The invasion of the Moguls he encountered with feeble arms and haughty embassies. "On the divine decree," said the caliph Mostafem, "is founded the throne of the sons of Abbas: and their foes shall surely be destroyed in this world and in the next. Who is this Holagou that dares to arise against them? If he be desirous of peace, let him instantly depart from the sacred territory; and perhaps he may obtain from our clemency the pardon of his fault." This presumption was cherished by a perfidious vizir, who assured his master, that, even if the Barbarians had entered the city, the women and children, from the terraces, would be sufficient to overwhelm them with

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stones. But when Holagou touched the phantom, it instantly vanished into smoke. After a siege of two months, Bagdad was stormed and sacked by the Moguls: and their savage commander pronounced the death of the caliph Mostafem, the last of the temporal successors of Mahomet; whose noble kinsmen, of the race of Abbas, had reigned in Asia above five hundred years. Whatever might be the designs of the conqueror, the holy cities of Mecca and Medina²⁶ were protected by the Arabian desert; but the Moguls spread beyond the Tigris and Euphrates, pillaged Aleppo and Damascus, and threatened to join the Franks in the deliverance of Jerusalem. Egypt was lost, had she been defended only by her feeble offspring; but the Mamalukes had breathed in their infancy the keenness of a Scythian air: equal in valour, superior in discipline, they met the Moguls in many a well-fought field; and drove back the stream of hostility to the eastward of the Euphrates. But it overflowed with resistless violence the kingdoms of Armenia and Anatolia, of which the former was possessed by the Christians, and the latter by the Turks. The sultans of Iconium opposed some resistance to the Mogul arms, till Azzadin sought a refuge among the Greeks of Constantinople, and his feeble successors, the last of the Seljukian dynasty, were finally extirpated by the khans of Persia.

Of Anatolia,
A. D.
1242—1272.

Of Kipzak,
Russia, Po-
land, Hun-
gary, etc.

III. No sooner had Octai subverted the northern empire of China, than he resolved to visit with his arms, the most remote countries of the West.

Fifteen hundred thousand Moguls and Tartars were inscribed on the military roll; of these the great khan selected a third, which he entrusted to the command of his nephew Batou, the son of Tuli; who reigned over his father's conquests to the north of the Caspian Sea. After a festival of forty days, Batou set forwards on this great expedition; and such was the speed and ardour of his innumerable squadrons, that in less than six years they had measured a line of ninety degrees of longitude, a fourth part of the circumference of the globe. The great rivers of Asia and Europe, the Volga and Kama, the Don and Borysthenes, the Vistula and Danube, they either swam with their horses, or passed on the ice, or traversed in leathern boats, which followed the camp, and transported their waggons and artillery. By the first victories of Batou, the remains of national freedom were eradicated in the immense plains of Turkestan and Kipzak²⁷. In his rapid progress, he overran the kingdoms, as they are now styled, of Astracan and Cazan; and the troops which he detached towards mount Caucasus, explored the most secret recesses of Georgia and Circassia. The civil discord of the great dukes, or princes, of Russia, betrayed their country to the Tartars. They spread from Livonia to the Black Sea, and both Moscow and Kiow, the modern and the ancient capitals, were reduced to ashes; a temporary ruin, less fatal than the deep, and perhaps indelible, mark, which a servitude of two hundred years has

CHAP. imprinted on the character of the Russians. The
 LXIV. Tartars ravaged with equal fury the countries
 which they hoped to possess, and those which
 they were hastening to leave. From the per-
 manent conquest of Russia, they made a deadly,
 though transient, inroad into the heart of Poland,
 and as far as the borders of Germany. The cities
 of Lublin and Cracow were obliterated: they
 approached the shores of the Baltic; and in the
 battle of Lignitz, they defeated the dukes of
 Silesia, the Polish palatines, and the great master
 of the Teutonic order; and filled nine sacks with
 the right ears of the slain. From Lignitz, the
 extreme point of their western march, they
 turned aside to the invasion of Hungary; and the
 presence or spirit of Batou inspired the host of
 five hundred thousand men: the Carpathian hills
 could not be long impervious to their divided
 columns; and their approach had been fondly
 disbelieved till it was irresistibly felt. The king,
 Bela the fourth, assembled the military force of
 his counts and bishops: but he had alienat-
 ed the nation by adopting a vagrant hord of
 forty thousand families of Comans, and these
 savage guests were provoked to revolt by the
 suspicion of treachery and the murder of their
 prince. The whole country north of the Danube
 was lost in a day, and depopulated in a summer;
 and the ruins of cities and churches were over-
 spread with the bones of the natives, who
 expiated the sins of their Turkish ancestors.
 An ecclesiastic, who fled from the sack of
 Waradin, describes the calamities which he had

seen or suffered; and the sanguinary rage of sieges and battles is far less atrocious than the treatment of the fugitives, who had been allured from the woods under a promise of peace and pardon, and who were coolly slaughtered as soon as they had performed the labours of the harvest and vintage. In the winter, the Tartars passed the Danube on the ice, and advanced to Gran or Strigonium, a German colony, and the metropolis of the kingdom. Thirty engines were planted against the walls; the ditches were filled with sacks of earth and dead bodies; and after a promiscuous massacre, three hundred noble matrons were slain in the presence of the khan. Of all the cities and fortresses of Hungary, three alone survived the Tartar invasion, and the unfortunate Bela hid his head among the islands of the Adriatic.

The Latin world was darkened by this cloud of savage hostility: a Russian fugitive carried the alarm to Sweden; and the remote nations of the Baltic and the ocean trembled at the approach of the Tartars²⁸, whom their fear and ignorance were inclined to separate from the human species. Since the invasion of the Arabs in the eighth century, Europe had never been exposed to a similar calamity; and if the disciples of Mahomet would have oppressed her religion and liberty, it might be apprehended that the shepherds of Scythia would extinguish her cities, her arts, and all the institutions of civil society. The Roman pontiff attempted to appease and convert these invincible

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Pagans by a mission of Franciscan and Dominican friars; but he was astonished by the reply of the khan, that the sons of God and of Zingis were invested with a divine power to subdue or extirpate the nations; and that the pope would be involved in the universal destruction, unless he visited in person, and as a suppliant, the royal hord. The emperor Frederic the second embraced a more generous mode of defence; and his letters to the kings of France and England, and the princes of Germany, represented the common danger, and urged them to arm their vassals in this just and rational crusade²⁹. The Tartars themselves were awed by the fame and valour of the Franks: the town of Newstadt in Austria was bravely defended against them by fifty knights and twenty cross-bows; and they raised the siege on the appearance of a German army. After wasting the adjacent kingdoms of Servia, Bosnia, and Bulgaria, Batou slowly retreated from the Danube to the Volga, to enjoy the rewards of victory in the city and palace of Serai, which started at his command from the midst of the desert.

Of Siberia,
A. D. 1242,
etc.

IV. Even the poor and frozen regions of the North attracted the arms of the Moguls: Sheibani Khan, the brother of the great Batou, led an hord of fifteen thousand families into the wilds of Siberia; and his descendants reigned at Tobolskoy above three centuries, till the Russian conquest. The spirit of enterprise which pursued the course of the Oby and Yenisei must have

led to the discovery of the icy sea. After brushing away the monstrous fables, of men with dogs heads and cloven feet, we shall find, that, fifteen years after the death of Zingis, the Moguls were informed of the name and manners of the Samoyedes in the neighbourhood of the polar circle, who dwelt in subterraneous huts, and derived their furs and their food from the sole occupation of hunting³⁰.

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While China, Syria, and Poland, were invaded at the same time by the Moguls and Tartars, the authors of the mighty mischief were content with the knowledge and declaration, that their word was the sword of death. Like the first caliphs, the first successors of Zingis seldom appeared in person at the head of their victorious armies. On the banks of the Onon and Selinga, the royal or *golden hord* exhibited the contrast of simplicity and greatness; of the roasted sheep and mare's milk which composed their banquets; and of a distribution in one day of five hundred waggon's of gold and silver. The ambassadors and princes of Europe and Asia were compelled to undertake this distant and laborious pilgrimage; and the life and reign of the great dukes of Russia, the kings of Georgia and Armenia, the sultans of Iconium, and the emirs of Persia, were decided by the frown or smile of the great khan. The sons and grandsons of Zingis had been accustomed to the pastoral life; but the village of Caracorum³¹ was gradually ennobled by their

The successors
of Zingis,
A. D.
1227 — 1259.

C H A P. election and residence. A change of manners is
 LXIV. implied in the removal of Octai and Mangou from a tent to an house; and their example was imitated by the princes of their family and the great officers of the empire. Instead of the boundless forest, the inclosure of a park afforded the more indolent pleasures of the chace; their new habitations were decorated with painting and sculpture; their superfluous treasures were cast in fountains, and basons, and statues of massy silver; and the artists of China and Paris vied with each other in the service of the great khan³². Caracorum contained two streets, the one of Chinese mechanics, the other of Mahometan traders; and the places of religious worship, one Nestorian church, two moschs, and twelve temples of various idols, may represent in some degree the number and division of inhabitants. Yet a French missionary declares, that the town of St. Denys, near Paris, was more considerable than the Tartar capital; and that the whole palace of Mangou was scarcely equal to a tenth part of that Benedictine abbey. The conquests of Russia and Syria might amuse the vanity of the great khans; but they were seated on the borders of China; the acquisition of that empire was the nearest and most interesting object; and they might learn from their pastoral œconomy, that it is for the advantage of the shepherd to protect and propagate his flock. I have already celebrated the wisdom and virtue of a Mandarin, who prevented the desolation of five populous and cultivated

adopt the
 manners of
 China,

provinces. In a spotless administration of thirty years, this friend of his country and of mankind continually laboured to mitigate, or suspend, the havock of war; to save the monuments, and to rekindle the flame, of science; to restrain the military commander by the restoration of civil magistrates; and to instil the love of peace and justice into the minds of the Moguls. He struggled with the barbarism of the first conquerors; but his salutary lessons produced a rich harvest in the second generation. The northern, and by degrees the southern, empire, acquiesced in the government of Cublai, the lieutenant, and afterwards the successor, of Mangou; and the nation was loyal to a prince who had been educated in the manners of China. He restored the forms of her venerable constitution; and the victors submitted to the laws, the fashions, and even the prejudices, of the vanquished people. This peaceful triumph, which has been more than once repeated, may be ascribed in a great measure to the numbers and servitude of the Chinese. The Mogul army was dissolved in a vast and populous country; and their emperors adopted with pleasure a political system, which gives to the prince the solid substance of despotism, and leaves to the subject the empty names of philosophy, freedom, and filial obedience. Under the reign of Cublai, letters and commerce, peace and justice, were restored; the great canal, of five hundred miles, was opened from Nankin to the capital; he fixed his residence at Peking; and

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1259—1368.

C H A P. LXIV. displayed in his court the magnificence of the greatest monarch of Asia. Yet this learned prince declined from the pure and simple religion of his great ancestor; he sacrificed to the idol Fo; and his blind attachment to the lamas of Thibet and the bonzes of China³³ provoked the censure of the disciples of Confucius. His successors polluted the palace with a crowd of eunuchs, physicians, and astrologers, while thirteen millions of their subjects were consumed in the provinces by famine. One hundred and forty years after the death of Zingis, his degenerate race, the dynasty of the Yuen, was expelled by a revolt of the native Chinese; and the Mogul emperors were lost in the oblivion of the desert. Before this revolution, they had forfeited their supremacy over the dependent branches of their house, the khans of Kipzak and Russia, the khans of Zagatai or Tranfoxiana, and the khans of Iran or Persia. By their distance and power, these royal lieutenants had soon been released from the duties of obedience; and, after the death of Cublai, they scorned to accept a sceptre or a title from his unworthy successors. According to their respective situation they maintained the simplicity of the pastoral life, or assumed the luxury of the cities of Asia; but the princes and their hords were alike disposed for the reception of a foreign worship. After some hesitation between the Gospel and the Koran, they conformed to the religion of Mahomet; and while they adopted for their brethren the Arabs and Persians, they renounced

Division of
the Mogul
empire,

A. D.

1259—1300,

all intercourse with the ancient Moguls, the idolaters of China. C H A P. LXIV.

In this shipwreck of nations, some surprise may be excited by the escape of the Roman empire, whose relics, at the time of the Mogul invasion, were dismembered by the Greeks and Latins. Less potent than Alexander, they were pressed, like the Macedonian, both in Europe and Asia, by the shepherds of Scythia; and had the Tartars undertaken the siege, Constantinople must have yielded to the fate of Pekin, Samarcand, and Bagdad. The glorious and voluntary retreat of Batou from the Danube was insulted by the vain triumph of the Franks and Greeks³⁴; and in a second expedition death surprised him in full march to attack the capital of the Cæsars. His brother Borga carried the Tartar arms into Bulgaria and Thrace; but he was diverted from the Byzantine war by a visit to Novogorod, in the fifty-seventh degree of latitude, where he numbered the inhabitants and regulated the tributes of Russia. The Mogul khan formed an alliance with the Mamalukes against his brethren of Persia: three hundred thousand horse penetrated through the gates of Derbend; and the Greeks might rejoice in the first example of domestic war. After the recovery of Constantinople, Michael Palæologus³⁵, at a distance from his court and army, was surprised and surrounded in a Thracian castle by twenty thousand Tartars. But the object of their march was a private interest: they came to the deliverance of Azzadin,

Escape of Constantinople and the Greek empire from the Moguls, A. D. 1240 — 1304.

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the Turkish sultan; and were content with his person and the treasure of the emperor. Their general Noga, whose name is perpetuated in the hords of Astracan, raised a formidable rebellion against Mengo Timour, the third of the khans of Kipzak; obtained in marriage Maria the natural daughter of Palæologus; and guarded the dominions of his friend and father. The subsequent invasions of a Scythian cast were those of outlaws and fugitives; and some thousands of Alani and Comans, who had been driven from their native seats, were reclaimed from a vagrant life, and enlisted in the service of the empire. Such was the influence in Europe of the invasion of the Moguls. The first terror of their arms secured, rather than disturbed, the peace of the Roman Asia. The sultan of Iconium solicited a personal interview with John Vataces; and his artful policy encouraged the Turks to defend their barrier against the common enemy³⁶. That barrier indeed was soon overthrown; and the servitude and ruin of the Seljukians exposed the nakedness of the Greeks. The formidable Holagou threatened to march to Constantinople at the head of four hundred thousand men; and the groundless panic of the citizens of Nice will present an image of the terror which he had inspired. The accident of a procession, and the sound of a doleful litany, "From the fury of the Tartars, good Lord deliver us," had scattered the hasty report of an assault and massacre. In the blind credulity of fear, the streets of Nice were crowded with
thousands

thousands of both sexes, who knew not from what or to whom they fled; and some hours elapsed before the firmness of the military officers could relieve the city from this imaginary foe. But the ambition of Holagou and his successors was fortunately diverted by the conquest of Bagdad, and a long vicissitude of Syrian wars: their hostility to the Moslems inclined them to unite with the Greeks and Franks³⁷; and their generosity or contempt had offered the kingdom of Anatolia as the reward of an Armenian vassal. The fragments of the Seljukian monarchy were disputed by the emirs who had occupied the cities or the mountains; but they all confessed the supremacy of the khan of Persia; and he often interposed his authority, and sometimes his arms, to check their depredations, and to preserve the peace and balance of his Turkish frontier. The death of Cazan³⁸, one of the greatest and most accomplished princes of the house of Zingis, removed this salutary control; and the decline of the Moguls gave a free scope to the rise and progress of the OTTOMAN EMPIRE³⁹.

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Decline of
the Mogul
khans of Persia,
A. D. 1304.
May 31.

After the retreat of Zingis, the sultan Gelaled-din of Carizme had returned from India to the possession and defence of his Persian kingdoms. In the space of eleven years, that hero fought in person fourteen battles; and such was his activity, that he led his cavalry in seventeen days from Teflis to Kerman, a march of a thousand miles. Yet he was oppressed by the jealousy of the Moslem princes, and the innumerable armies of

Origin of the
Ottomans,
A. D. 1240,
etc.

G H A P.
LXIV.

Reign of
Othman,
A. D.
1299—1326.

the Moguls; and after his last defeat, Gelaeddin perished ignobly in the mountains of Curdistan. His death dissolved a veteran and adventurous army, which included under the name of Carizmians or Corasmins many Turkman hords, that had attached themselves to the sultan's fortune. The bolder and more powerful chiefs invaded Syria, and violated the holy sepulchre of Jerusalem: the more humble engaged in the service of Aladin, sultan of Iconium; and among these were the obscure fathers of the Ottoman line. They had formerly pitched their tents near the southern banks of the Oxus, in the plains of Mahan and Nesa; and it is somewhat remarkable, that the same spot should have produced the first authors of the Parthian and Turkish empires. At the head, or in the rear, of a Carizmian army, Soliman Shah was drowned in the passage of the Euphrates: his son Orthogrul became the soldier and subject of Aladin, and established at Surgut, on the banks of the Sangar, a camp of four hundred families or tents, whom he governed fifty-two years both in peace and war. He was the father of Thaman, or Athman, whose Turkish name has been melted into the appellation of the caliph Othman; and if we describe that pastoral chief as a shepherd and a robber, we must separate from those characters all idea of ignominy and baseness. Othman possessed, and perhaps surpassed, the ordinary virtues of a soldier; and the circumstances of time and place were propitious to his independence and success. The Seljukian dynasty

was no more; and the distance and decline of the Mogul khans soon enfranchised him from the control of a superior. He was situate on the verge of the Greek empire: the Koran sanctified his *gazi*; or holy war, against the infidels; and their political errors unlocked the passes of mount Olympus, and invited him to descend into the plains of Bithynia. Till the reign of Palæologus, these passes had been vigilantly guarded by the militia of the country, who were repaid by their own safety and an exemption from taxes. The emperor abolished their privilege and assumed their office; but the tribute was rigorously collected, the custody of the passes was neglected, and the hardy mountaineers degenerated into a trembling crowd of peasants without spirit or discipline. It was on the twenty-seventh of July, in the year twelve hundred and ninety-nine of the Christian æra, that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia⁴⁰; and the singular accuracy of the date seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster. The annals of the twenty-seven years of his reign would exhibit a repetition of the same inroads; and his hereditary troops were multiplied in each campaign by the accession of captives and volunteers. Instead of retreating to the hills, he maintained the most useful and defensible posts; fortified the towns and castles which he had first pillaged; and renounced the pastoral life for the baths and palaces of his infant capitals. But it was not till Othman was oppressed by age and

C H A P. infirmities, that he received the welcome news
 LXIV. of the conquest of Prusa, which had been surrendered by famine or treachery to the arms of his son Orchan. The glory of Othman is chiefly founded on that of his descendants; but the Turks have transcribed or composed a royal testament of his last counsels of justice and moderation⁴¹.

Reign of
 Orchan,
 A. D.
 1326—1360.

From the conquest of Prusa, we may date the true æra of the Ottoman empire. The lives and possessions of the Christian subjects were redeemed by a tribute or ransom of thirty thousand crowns of gold; and the city, by the labours of Orchan, assumed the aspect of a Mahometan capital; Prusa was decorated with a mosch, a college, and an hospital, of royal foundation; the Seljukian coin was changed for the name and impression of the new dynasty: and the most skilful professors, of human and divine knowledge, attracted the Persian and Arabian students from the ancient schools of Oriental learning. The office of vizir was instituted for Aladin, the brother of Orchan; and a different habit distinguished the citizens from the peasants, the Moslems from the infidels. All the troops of Othman had consisted of loose squadrons of Turkman cavalry; who served without pay and fought without discipline: but a regular body of infantry was first established and trained by the prudence of his son. A great number of volunteers was enrolled with a small stipend, but with the permission of living at home, unless they were

summoned to the field: their rude manners, and seditious temper, disposed Orchan to educate his young captives as his soldiers and those of the prophet; but the Turkish peasants were still allowed to mount on horseback, and follow his standard, with the appellation and the hopes of *freebooters*. By these arts he formed an army of twenty-five thousand Moslems: a train of battering engines was framed for the use of sieges; and the first successful experiment was made on the cities of Nice and Nicomedia. Orchan granted a safe-conduct to all who were desirous of departing with their families and effects; but the widows of the slain were given in marriage to the conquerors; and the sacrilegious plunder, the books, the vases, and the images, were sold or ransomed at Constantinople. The emperor Andronicus the younger was vanquished and wounded by the son of Othman⁴²: he subdued the whole province or kingdom of Bithynia, as far as the shores of the Bosphorus and Hellespont; and the Christians confessed the justice and clemency of a reign, which claimed the voluntary attachment of the Turks of Asia. Yet Orchan was content with the modest title of emir; and in the list of his compeers, the princes of Roum or Anatolia⁴³, his military forces were surpassed by the emirs of Ghermian and Caramania, each of whom could bring into the field an army of forty thousand men. Their dominions were situate in the heart of the Seljukian kingdom: but the holy warriors, though of inferior note, who

His conquest
of Bithynia,
A. D.
1326—1339.

Division of
Anatolia
among the
Turkish
emirs,
A. D. 1300,
etc.

CHAP.
LXIV.

Loss of the
Asiatic pro-
vinces,
A. D. 1312,
etc.

formed new principalities on the Greek empire, are more conspicuous in the light of history. The maritime country from the Propontis to the Mæander and the isle of Rhodes, so long threatened and so often pillaged, was finally lost about the thirtieth year of Andronicus the elder⁴⁴. Two Turkish chieftains, Sarukhan and Aidin, left their names to their conquests, and their conquests to their posterity. The captivity or ruin of the *seven* churches of Asia was consummated; and the barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia still trample on the monuments of classic and Christian antiquity. In the loss of Ephesus, the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick, of the revelations⁴⁵; the desolation is complete; and the temple of Diana, or the church of Mary, will equally elude the search of the curious traveller. The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardes is reduced to a miserable village; the God of Mahomet, without a rival or a son, is invoked in the moschs of Thyatira and Pergamus; and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy, or courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years; and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect; a column

in a scene of ruins; a pleasing example, that the paths of honour and safety may sometimes be the same. The fervitude of Rhodes was delayed above two centuries by the establishment of the knights of St. John of Jerusalem⁴⁶: under the discipline of the order, that island emerged into fame and opulence; the noble and warlike monks were renowned by land and sea: and the bulwark of Christendom provoked, and repelled, the arms of the Turks and Saracens.

C H A P.

LXIV.

The knights of Rhodes, A. D. 1310, August 15 — A. D. 1523, January 1.

The Greeks, by their intestine divisions, were the authors of their final ruin. During the civil wars of the elder and younger Andronicus, the son of Othman atchieved, almost without resistance the conquest of Bithynia; and the same disorders encouraged the Turkish emirs of Lydia and Ionia to build a fleet, and to pillage the adjacent islands and the sea-coast of Europe. In the defence of his life and honour, Cantacuzene was tempted to prevent, or imitate, his adversaries; by calling to his aid the public enemies of his religion and country. Amir, the son of Aidin, concealed under a Turkish garb the humanity and politeness of a Greek; he was united with the great domestic by mutual esteem and reciprocal services; and their friendship is compared, in the vain rhetoric of the times, to the perfect union of Orestes and Pylades⁴⁷. On the report of the danger of his friend, who was persecuted by an ungrateful court, the prince of Ionia assembled at Smyrna a fleet of three hundred vessels, with an army of twenty-nine thousand

First passage of the Turks into Europe, A. D.

1341—1347.

CHAP.
LXIV.

men, sailed in the depth of winter, and cast anchor at the mouth of the Hebrus. From thence, with a chosen band of two thousand Turks, he marched along the banks of the river, and rescued the empress, who was besieged in Demotica by the wild Bulgarians. At that disastrous moment, the life or death of his beloved Cantacuzene was concealed by his flight into Servia: but the grateful Irene, impatient to behold her deliverer, invited him to enter the city, and accompanied her message with a present of rich apparel, and an hundred horses. By a peculiar strain of delicacy, the gentle Barbarian refused, in the absence of an unfortunate friend, to visit his wife, or to taste the luxuries of the palace; sustained in his tent the rigour of the winter; and rejected the hospitable gift, that he might share the hardships of two thousand companions, all as deserving as himself of that honour and distinction. Necessity and revenge might justify his prædatory excursions by sea and land: he left nine thousand five hundred men for the guard of his fleet; and persevered in the fruitless search of Cantacuzene, till his embarkation was hastened by a fictitious letter, the severity of the season, the clamours of his independent troops, and the weight of his spoil and captives. In the prosecution of the civil war, the prince of Ionia twice returned to Europe; joined his arms with those of the emperor; besieged Thessalonica, and threatened Constantinople. Calumny might affix some reproach on his imperfect aid, his hasty departure,

and a bribe of ten thousand crowns, which he accepted from the Byzantine court; but his friend was satisfied; and the conduct of Amir is excused by the more sacred duty of defending against the Latins his hereditary dominions. The maritime power of the Turks had united the pope, the king of Cyprus, the republic of Venice, and the order of St. John, in a laudable crusade; their gallies invaded the coast of Ionia; and Amir was slain with an arrow, in the attempt to wrest from the Rhodian knights the citadel of Smyrna⁴⁸. Before his death, he generously recommended another ally of his own nation; not more sincere or zealous than himself, but more able to afford a prompt and powerful succour, by his situation along the Propontis and in the front of Constantinople. By the prospect of a more advantageous treaty, the Turkish prince of Bithynia was detached from his engagements with Anne of Savoy; and the pride of Orchan dictated the most solemn protestations, that if he could obtain the daughter of Cantacuzene, he would invariably fulfil the duties of a subject and a son. Parental tenderness was silenced by the voice of ambition; the Greek clergy connived at the marriage of a Christian princess with a sectary of Mahomet; and the father of Theodora describes, with shameful satisfaction, the dishonour of the purple⁴⁹. A body of Turkish cavalry attended the ambassadors, who disembarked from thirty vessels before his camp of Selybria. A stately pavilion was erected, in which the empress Irene passed the night with

Marriage of
Orchan with
a Greek princess,
A. D. 1346.

her daughters. In the morning, Theodora ascended a throne, which was surrounded with curtains of silk and gold: the troops were under arms; but the emperor alone was on horseback. At a signal the curtains were suddenly withdrawn, to disclose the bride, or the victim, encircled by kneeling eunuchs and hymenæal torches: the sound of flutes and trumpets proclaimed the joyful event; and her pretended happiness was the theme of the nuptial song, which was chaunted by such poets as the age could produce. Without the rites of the church, Theodora was delivered to her barbarous lord: but it had been stipulated, that she should preserve her religion in the haram of Bursa; and her father celebrates her charity and devotion in this ambiguous situation. After his peaceful establishment on the throne of Constantinople, the Greek emperor visited his Turkish ally, who with four sons, by various wives, expected him at Scutari, on the Asiatic shore. The two princes partook, with seeming cordiality, of the pleasures of the banquet and the chase, and Theodora was permitted to repass the Bosphorus, and to enjoy some days in the society of her mother. But the friendship of Orchan was subservient to his religion and interest; and in the Genoese war he joined without a blush the enemies of Cantacuzene.

Establishment of the Ottomans in Europe, A. D. 1353.

In the treaty with the empress Anne, the Ottoman prince had inserted a singular condition, that it should be lawful for him to sell his prisoners at Constantinople, or transport them into

Asia. A naked crowd of Christians of both sexes and every age, of priests and monks, of matrons and virgins, was exposed in the public market; the whip was frequently used to quicken the charity of redemption; and the indigent Greeks deplored the fate of their brethren, who were led away to the worst evils of temporal and spiritual bondage⁵⁰. Cantacuzene was reduced to subscribe the same terms; and their execution must have been still more pernicious to the empire; a body of ten thousand Turks had been detached to the assistance of the empress Anne; but the entire forces of Orchan were exerted in the service of his father. Yet these calamities were of a transient nature; as soon as the storm had passed away, the fugitives might return to their habitations; and at the conclusion of the civil and foreign wars, Europe was completely evacuated by the Moslems of Asia. It was in his last quarrel with his pupil that Cantacuzene inflicted the deep and deadly wound, which could never be healed by his successors, and which is poorly expiated by his theological dialogues against the prophet Mahomet. Ignorant of their own history, the modern Turks confounded their first and their final passage of the Hellespont⁵¹, and describe the son of Orchan as a nocturnal robber, who, with eighty companions, explores by stratagem an hostile and unknown shore. Soliman, at the head of ten thousand horse, was transported in the vessels, and entertained as the friend, of the Greek emperor. In

C H A P. the civil wars of Romania, he performed some
 LXIV. service and perpetrated more mischief; but the
 Chersonesus was insensibly filled with a Turkish
 colony; and the Byzantine court solicited in
 vain the restitution of the fortresses of Thrace.
 After some artful delays between the Ottoman
 prince and his son, their ransom was valued at
 sixty thousand crowns, and the first payment
 had been made, when an earthquake shook the
 walls and cities of the provinces; the dismantled
 places were occupied by the Turks; and Galli-
 poli, the key of the Hellespont, was rebuilt and
 repeopled by the policy of Soliman. The abdi-
 cation of Cantacuzene dissolved the feeble bands
 of domestic alliance; and his last advice admo-
 nished his countrymen to decline a rash contest,
 and to compare their own weakness with the
 numbers and valour, the discipline and enthu-
 siasm, of the Moslems. His prudent counsels
 were despised by the headstrong vanity of youth,
 and soon justified by the victories of the Otto-
 mans. But as he practised in the field the exer-
 cise of the *jerid*, Soliman was killed by a fall from
 his horse; and the aged Orchan wept and expired
 on the tomb of his valiant son.

Death of
 Orchan and
 his son Soli-
 man.

The reign
 and European
 conquests of
 Amurath I.
 A. D.
 1360—1389,
 September.

But the Greeks had not time to rejoice in the
 death of their enemies; and the Turkish scymetar
 was wielded with the same spirit by Amurath
 the first, the son of Orchan and the brother of
 Soliman. By the pale and fainting light of the
 Byzantine annals⁵², we can discern, that he sub-
 dued without resistance the whole province of

Romania or Thrace, from the Hellespont to mount Hæmus, and the verge of the capital; and that Adrianople was chosen for the royal seat of his government and religion in Europe. Constantinople, whose decline is almost coeval with her foundation, had often, in the lapse of a thousand years, been assaulted by the Barbarians of the East and West; but never till this fatal hour had the Greeks been surrounded, both in Asia and Europe, by the arms of the same hostile monarchy. Yet the prudence or generosity of Amurath postponed for a while this easy conquest; and his pride was satisfied with the frequent and humble attendance of the emperor John Palæologus and his four sons, who followed at his summons the court and camp of the Ottoman prince. He marched against the Slavonian nations between the Danube and the Adriatic, the Bulgarians, Servians, Bosnians, and Albanians; and these warlike tribes, who had so often insulted the majesty of the empire, were repeatedly broken by his destructive inroads. Their countries did not abound either in gold or silver; nor were their rustic hamlets and townships enriched by commerce or decorated by the arts of luxury. But the natives of the soil have been distinguished in every age by their hardiness of mind and body; and they were converted by a prudent institution into the firmest and most faithful supporters of the Ottoman greatness⁵³. The vizir of Amurath reminded his sovereign that, according to the Mahometan law, he was entitled to a fifth part

C H A P. of the spoil and captives; and that the duty might
 LXIV. easily be levied, if vigilant officers were stationed
 at Gallipoli, to watch the passage, and to select
 for his use the stoutest and most beautiful of the
 Christian youth. The advice was followed; the
 edict was proclaimed; many thousands of the
 European captives were educated in religion and
 arms; and the new militia was consecrated and
 named by a celebrated dervish. Standing in the
 front of their ranks, he stretched the sleeve of
 his gown over the head of the foremost soldier,
 and his blessing was delivered in these words:
 “ Let them be called janizaries (*Yengi cheri*, or
 “ new soldiers); may their countenance be ever
 “ bright! their hand victorious! their sword
 “ keen! may their spear always hang over the
 “ heads of their enemies! and wheresoever they
 “ go, may they return with a *white face* “!”
 Such was the origin of these haughty troops,
 the terror of the nations, and sometimes of the
 sultans themselves. Their valour has declined,
 their discipline is relaxed, and their tumultuary
 array is incapable of contending with the order
 and weapons of modern tactics; but at the time
 of their institution, they possessed a decisive supe-
 riority in war; since a regular body of infantry,
 in constant exercise and pay, was not maintained
 by any of the princes of Christendom. The
 Janizaries fought with the zeal of proselytes
 against their *idolatrous* countrymen; and in the
 battle of Cossova, the league and independence
 of the Sclavonian tribes was finally crushed. As

The Janiza-
 ries.

the conqueror walked over the field, he observed that the greatest part of the slain consisted of beardless youths; and listened to the flattering reply of his vizir, that age and wisdom would have taught them not to oppose his irresistible arms. But the sword of his Janizaries could not defend him from the dagger of despair; a Servian soldier started from the crowd of dead bodies, and Amurath was pierced in the belly with a mortal wound. The grandson of Othman was mild in his temper, modest in his apparel, and a lover of learning and virtue; but the Moslems were scandalized at his absence from public worship; and he was corrected by the firmness of the musti, who dared to reject his testimony in a civil cause: a mixture of servitude and freedom not unfrequent in Oriental history⁵⁵.

The character of Bajazet, the son and successor of Amurath, is strongly expressed in his surname of *Ilderim*, or the lightning; and he might glory in an epithet, which was drawn from the fiery energy of his soul and the rapidity of his destructive march. In the fourteen years of his reign⁵⁶, he incessantly moved, at the head of his armies, from Bursa to Adrianople, from the Danube to the Euphrates; and, though he strenuously laboured for the propagation of the law, he invaded, with impartial ambition, the Christian and Mahometan princes of Europe and Asia. From Angora to Amasia and Erzeroum, the northern regions of Anatolia were reduced to his obedience: he stripped of their hereditary

C H A P.
LXIV.

The reign of
Bajazet I.
Ilderim,
A. D.
1389—1403,
March 9.

His conquests, from
the Euphrates to the
Danube.

CHAP. LXIV. possessions, his brother emirs of Ghermian and Caramania, of Aidin and Sarukhan; and after the conquest of Iconium, the ancient kingdom of the Seljukians again revived in the Ottoman dynasty. Nor were the conquests of Bajazet less rapid or important in Europe. No sooner had he imposed a regular form of servitude on the Servians and Bulgarians, than he passed the Danube to seek new enemies and new subjects in the heart of Moldavia⁵⁷. Whatever yet adhered to the Greek empire in Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly, acknowledged a Turkish master: an obsequious bishop led him through the gates of Thermopylæ into Greece; and we may observe, as a singular fact, that the widow of a Spanish chief, who possessed the ancient seat of the oracle of Delphi, deserved his favour by the sacrifice of a beauteous daughter. The Turkish communication between Europe and Asia had been dangerous and doubtful, till he stationed at Gallipoli a fleet of gallies, to command the Hellespont and intercept the Latin succours of Constantinople. While the monarch indulged his passions in a boundless range of injustice and cruelty, he imposed on his soldiers the most rigid laws of modesty and abstinence; and the harvest was peaceably reaped and sold within the precincts of his camp. Provoked by the loose and corrupt administration of justice, he collected in a house the judges and lawyers of his dominions, who expected that in a few moments the fire would be kindled to reduce them to ashes. His ministers trembled

trembled in silence : but an Æthiopian buffoon presumed to insinuate the true cause of the evil; and future venality was left without excuse, by annexing an adequate salary to the office of cadhi⁵⁸. The humble title of emir was no longer suitable to the Ottoman greatness; and Bajazet condescended to accept a patent of sultan from the caliphs who served in Egypt under the yoke of the Mamalukes⁵⁹: a last and frivolous homage that was yielded by force to opinion; by the Turkish conquerors to the house of Abbas and the successors of the Arabian prophet. The ambition of the sultan was inflamed by the obligation of deserving this august title; and he turned his arms against the kingdom of Hungary, the perpetual theatre of the Turkish victories and defeats. Sigismund, the Hungarian king, was the son and brother of the emperors of the West: his cause was that of Europe and the church: and, on the report of his danger, the bravest knights of France and Germany were eager to march under his standard and that of the cross. In the battle of Nicopolis, Bajazet defeated a confederate army of an hundred thousand Christians, who had proudly boasted, that if the sky should fall they could uphold it on their lances. The far greater part were slain or driven into the Danube; and Sigismund, escaping to Constantinople by the river and the Black Sea, returned after a long circuit to his exhausted kingdom⁶⁰. In the pride of victory, Bajazet threatened that he would besiege Buda; that he

C H A P.
LXIV.

Battle of Ni-
copolis,
A. D. 1396,
Sept. 28.

CHAP. would subdue the adjacent countries of Germany
 LXIV. and Italy; and that he would feed his horse with
 a bushel of oats on the altar of St. Peter at Rome.
 His progress was checked, not by the miraculous
 interposition of the apostle, not by a crusade of
 the Christian powers, but by a long and painful
 fit of the gout. The disorders of the moral,
 are sometimes corrected by those of the physical,
 world; and an acrimonious humour falling on a
 single fibre of one man, may prevent or suspend
 the misery of nations.

Crusade and
 captivity of
 the French
 princes,
 A. D.
 1396—1398.

Such is the general idea of the Hungarian war; but the disastrous adventure of the French has procured us some memorials which illustrate the victory and character of Bajazet⁶¹. The duke of Burgundy, sovereign of Flanders, and uncle of Charles the sixth, yielded to the ardour of his son, John count of Nevers; and the fearless youth was accompanied by four princes, his cousins, and those of the French monarch. Their inexperience was guided by the sire de Coucy, one of the best and oldest captains of Christendom⁶²; but the constable, admiral, and marshal, of France⁶³ commanded an army which did not exceed the number of a thousand knights and squires. These splendid names were the source of presumption and the bane of discipline. So many might aspire to command, that none were willing to obey; their national spirit despised both their enemies and their allies; and in the persuasion that Bajazet *would* fly, or *must* fall, they began to compute how soon they should

visit Constantinople and deliver the holy sepulchre. When their scouts announced the approach of the Turks, the gay and thoughtless youths were at table, already heated with wine; they instantly clasped their armour, mounted their horses, rode full speed to the vanguard, and resented as an affront the advice of Sigismond, which would have deprived them of the right and honour of the foremost attack. The battle of Nicopolis would not have been lost, if the French would have obeyed the prudence of the Hungarians: but it might have been gloriously won, had the Hungarians imitated the valour of the French. They dispersed the first line, consisting of the troops of Asia; forced a rampart of stakes, which had been planted against the cavalry; broke, after a bloody conflict, the Janizaries themselves; and were at length overwhelmed by the numerous squadrons that issued from the woods, and charged on all sides this handful of intrepid warriors. In the speed and secrecy of his march, in the order and evolutions of the battle, his enemies felt and admired the military talents of Bajazet. They accuse his cruelty in the use of victory. After reserving the count of Nevers, and four-and-twenty lords, whose birth and riches were attested by his Latin interpreters, the remainder of the French captives, who had survived the slaughter of the day, were led before his throne; and, as they refused to abjure their faith, were successively beheaded in his presence. The sultan was exasperated by the loss of his bravest

C H A P. Janizaries; and if it be true, that, on the eve of
 LXIV. the engagement, the French had massacred their
 Turkish prisoners⁶⁴, they might impute to them-
 selves the consequences of a just retaliation. A
 knight, whose life had been spared, was permit-
 ted to return to Paris, that he might relate the
 deplorable tale, and solicit the ransom of the
 noble captives. In the mean while, the count
 of Nevers, with the princes and barons of France,
 were dragged along in the marches of the Turkish
 camp, exposed as a grateful trophy to the Moslems
 of Europe and Asia, and strictly confined at
 Bursa, as often as Bajazet resided in his capital.
 The sultan was pressed each day to expiate with
 their blood the blood of his martyrs; but he had
 pronounced, that they should live, and either
 for mercy or destruction his word was irrevocable.
 He was assured of their value and importance
 by the return of the messenger, and the gifts
 and intercessions of the kings of France and of
 Cyprus. Lusignan presented him with a gold salt-
 cellar of curious workmanship, and of the price
 of ten thousand ducats; and Charles the sixth
 dispatched by the way of Hungary a cast of
 Norwegian hawks, and six horse-loads of scarlet
 cloth, of fine linen of Rheims, and of Arras
 tapestry, representing the battles of the great
 Alexander. After much delay, the effect of
 distance rather than of art, Bajazet agreed to
 accept a ransom of two hundred thousand ducats
 for the count of Nevers and the surviving princes
 and barons: the marshal Boucicault, a famous

warrior, was of the number of the fortunate; but the admiral of France had been slain in the battle; and the constable, with the sire de Coucy, died in the prison of Bursa. This heavy demand, which was doubled by incidental costs, fell chiefly on the duke of Burgundy, or rather on his Flemish subjects, who were bound by the feudal laws to contribute for the knighthood and captivity of the eldest son of their lord. For the faithful discharge of the debt, some merchants of Genoa gave security to the amount of five times the sum; a lesson to those warlike times, that commerce and credit are the links of the society of nations. It had been stipulated in the treaty, that the French captives should swear never to bear arms against the person of their conqueror; but the ungenerous restraint was abolished by Bajazet himself. "I despise," said he to the heir of Burgundy, "thy oaths and thy arms. Thou art young, and mayest be ambitious of effacing the disgrace or misfortune of thy first chivalry. Assemble thy powers, proclaim thy design, and be assured that Bajazet will rejoice to meet thee a second time in a field of battle." Before their departure, they were indulged in the freedom and hospitality of the court of Bursa. The French princes admired the magnificence of the Ottoman, whose hunting and hawking equipage was composed of seven thousand huntsmen and seven thousand falconers⁶⁵. In their presence, and at his command, the belly of one of his chamberlains was cut open, on a complaint

C H A P. LXIV. against him for drinking the goats-milk of a poor woman. The strangers were astonished by this act of justice; but it was the justice of a sultan who disdains to balance the weight of evidence or to measure the degrees of guilt.

The emperor
John Palæo-
logus,

A. D. 1355,

January 8—

A. D. 1391.

After his enfranchisement from an oppressive guardian, John Palæologus remained thirty-six years, the helpless, and as it should seem, the careless, spectator, of the public ruin⁶⁶. Love, or rather lust, was his only vigorous passion; and in the embraces of the wives and virgins of the city, the turkish slave forgot the dishonour of the emperor of the *Romans*. Andronicus, his eldest son, had formed, at Adrianople, an intimate and guilty friendship with Sauzes the son of Amurath; and the two youths conspired against the authority and lives of their parents. The presence of Amurath in Europe soon discovered and dissipated their rash counsels; and, after depriving Sauzes of his sight, the Ottoman threatened his vassal with the treatment of an accomplice and an enemy, unless he inflicted a similar punishment on his own son. Palæologus trembled and obeyed; and a cruel precaution involved in the same sentence the childhood and innocence of John the son of the criminal. But the operation was so mildly, or so unskilfully, performed, that the one retained the sight of an eye, and the other was afflicted only with the infirmity of squinting. Thus excluded from the succession, the two princes were confined in the tower of Anema; and the piety of Manuel, the second son

Discord of
the Greeks.

of the reigning monarch, was rewarded with the gift of the Imperial crown. But at the end of two years, the turbulence of the Latins and the levity of the Greeks produced a revolution; and the two emperors were buried in the tower from whence the two prisoners were exalted to the throne. Another period of two years afforded Palæologus and Manuel the means of escape: it was contrived by the magic, or subtlety, of a monk, who was alternately named the angel or the devil: they fled to Scutari; their adherents armed in their cause; and the two Byzantine factions displayed the ambition and animosity, with which Cæsar and Pompey had disputed the empire of the world. The Roman world was now contracted to a corner of Thrace, between the Propontis and the Black Sea, about fifty miles in length and thirty in breadth; a space of ground not more extensive than the lesser principalities of Germany or Italy, if the remains of Constantinople had not still represented the wealth and populousness of a kingdom. To restore the public peace, it was found necessary to divide this fragment of the empire; and while Palæologus and Manuel were left in possession of the capital, almost all that lay without the walls was ceded to the blind princes, who fixed their residence at Rhodosto and Selybria. In the tranquil slumber of royalty, the passions of John Palæologus survived his reason and his strength; he deprived his favourite and heir of a blooming princess of Trebizond; and while the feeble

CHAP. emperor laboured to consummate his nuptials;
 LXIV. Manuel, with an hundred of the noblest Greeks,
 was sent on a peremptory summons to the Ottoman
porte. They served with honour in the wars of
 Bajazet; but a plan of fortifying Constantinople
 excited his jealousy: he threatened their lives;
 the new works were instantly demolished; and
 we shall bestow a praise, perhaps above the
 merit of Palæologus, if we impute this last humili-
 ation as the cause of his death.

The emperor
 Manuel,
 A. D.
 1391—1425,
 July 25.

The earliest intelligence of that event was
 communicated to Manuel, who escaped with
 speed and secrecy from the palace of Bursa to
 the Byzantine throne. Bajazet affected a proud
 indifference at the loss of this valuable pledge;
 and while he pursued his conquests in Europe
 and Asia, he left the emperor to struggle with
 his blind cousin John of Selybria, who, in
 eight years of civil war, asserted his right of
 primogeniture. At length the ambition of the
 victorious sultan pointed to the conquest of Con-
 stantinople; but he listened to the advice of his
 vizir, who represented, that such an enterprise
 might unite the powers of Christendom in a se-
 cond and more formidable crusade. His epistle
 to the emperor was conceived in these words:
 “ By the divine clemency, our invincible scy-
 “ metar has reduced to our obedience almost all
 “ Asia, with many and large countries in Eu-
 “ rope, excepting only the city of Constantino-
 “ ple; for beyond the walls thou hast nothing
 “ left. Resign that city; stipulate thy reward;

Distress of
 Constanti-
 nople,
 A. D.

1395—1402.

“ or tremble , for thyself and thy unhappy people,
 “ at the consequences of a rash refusal.” But his ambassadors were instructed to soften their tone , and to propose a treaty, which was subscribed with submission and gratitude. A truce of ten years was purchased by an annual tribute of thirty thousand crowns of gold : the Greeks deplored the public toleration of the law of Mahomet, and Bajazet enjoyed the glory of establishing a Turkish cadhi, and founding a royal mosch in the metropolis of the Eastern church ⁶⁷. Yet this truce was soon violated by the restless sultan : in the cause of the prince of Selybria, the lawful emperor, an army of Ottomans, again threatened Constantinople ; and the distress of Manuel implored the protection of the king of France. His plaintive embassy obtained much pity and some relief ; and the conduct of the succour was entrusted to the marshal Boucicault ⁶⁸, whose religious chivalry was inflamed by the desire of revenging his captivity on the infidels. He sailed with four ships of war, from Aigues-mortes to the Hellespont ; forced the passage, which was guarded by seventeen Turkish gallies ; landed at Constantinople a supply of six hundred men at arms and sixteen hundred archers ; and reviewed them in the adjacent plain, without condescending to number or array the multitude of Greeks. By his presence, the blockade was raised both by sea and land ; the flying squadrons of Bajazet were driven to a more respectful distance ; and several castles in Europe and Asia were

CHAP. stormed by the emperor and the marshal, who
 LXIV. fought with equal valour by each other's side. But
 the Ottomans soon returned with an increase of
 numbers; and the intrepid Boucicault, after a
 year's struggle, resolved to evacuate a country
 which could no longer afford either pay or pro-
 visions for his soldiers. The marshal offered to
 conduct Manuel to the French court, where he
 might solicit in person a supply of men and mo-
 ney; and advised in the mean while, that, to
 extinguish all domestic discord, he should leave
 his blind competitor on the throne. The pro-
 posal was embraced: the prince of Selybria was
 introduced to the capital; and such was the pub-
 lic misery, that the lot of the exile seemed more
 fortunate than that of the sovereign. Instead of
 applauding the success of his vassal, the Turkish
 sultan claimed the city as his own; and on the
 refusal of the emperor John, Constantinople was
 more closely pressed by the calamities of war and
 famine. Against such an enemy, prayers and re-
 sistance were alike unavailing; and the savage
 would have devoured his prey, if, in the fatal
 moment, he had not been overthrown by an-
 other savage stronger than himself. By the vic-
 tory of Timour or Tamerlane, the fall of Con-
 stantinople was delayed about fifty years; and
 this important, though accidental, service may
 justly introduce the life and character of the Mo-
 gul conqueror.

CHAP. LXV.

Elevation of Timour, or Tamerlane to the Throne of Samarcand. — His Conquests in Persia, Georgia, Tartary, Russia, India, Syria, and Anatolia. — His Turkish War. — Defeat and Captivity of Bajazet. — Death of Timour. — Civil War of the Sons of Bajazet. — Restoration of the Turkish Monarchy by Mahomet the First. — Siege of Constantinople by Amurath the Second.

THE conquest and monarchy of the world was the first object of the ambition of TIMOUR. To live in the memory and esteem of future ages was the second wish of his magnanimous spirit. All the civil and military transactions of his reign were diligently recorded in the journals of his secretaries¹: the authentic narrative was revised by the persons best informed of each particular transaction; and it is believed in the empire and family of Timour, that the monarch himself composed the *commentaries*² of his life, and the *institutions*³ of his government⁴. But these cares were ineffectual for the preservation of his fame, and these precious memorials in the Mogul or Persian language were concealed from the world, or at

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Histories of
TIMOUR, or
Tamerlane.

CHAP. LXV. least from the knowledge of Europe. The nations which he vanquished exercised a base and impotent revenge; and ignorance has long repeated the tale of calumny⁵, which had disfigured the birth and character, the person, and even the name, of *Tamerlane*⁶. Yet his real merit would be enhanced, rather than debased, by the elevation of a peasant to the throne of Asia; nor can his lameness be a theme of reproach, unless he had the weakness to blush at a natural, or perhaps an honourable, infirmity.

In the eyes of the Moguls, who held the indefeasible succession of the house of Zingis, he was doubtless a rebel subject; yet he sprang from the noble tribe of Berlafs: his fifth ancestor, Carashtar Nevian, had been the vizir of Zagatai, in his new realm of Transoxiana; and in the ascent of some generations, the branch of Timour is confounded, at least by the females⁷, with the Imperial stem⁸. He was born forty miles to the south of Samarcand, in the village of Sebzar, in the fruitful territory of Cash, of which his fathers were the hereditary chiefs, as well as of a toman of ten thousand horse⁹. His birth¹⁰ was cast on one of those periods of anarchy which announce the fall of the Asiatic dynasties, and open a new field to adventurous ambition. The khans of Zagatai were extinct; the emirs aspired to independence; and their domestic feuds could only be suspended by the conquest and tyranny of the khans of Kashgar, who, with an army of Getes or Calmucks¹¹, invaded the Transoxian kingdom.

From the twelfth year of his age, Timour had entered the field of action; in the twenty-fifth, he stood forth as the deliverer of his country; and the eyes and wishes of the people were turned towards an hero who suffered in their cause. The chiefs of the law and of the army had pledged their salvation to support him with their lives and fortunes; but in the hour of danger they were silent and afraid; and, after waiting seven days on the hills of Samarcand, he retreated to the desert with only sixty horsemen. The fugitives were overtaken by a thousand Getes, whom he repulsed with incredible slaughter, and his enemies were forced to exclaim, "Timour is a wonderful man: fortune and the divine favour are with him." But in this bloody action his own followers were reduced to ten, a number which was soon diminished by the desertion of three Carizmians. He wandered in the desert with his wife, seven companions, and four horses; and sixty-two days was he plunged in a loathsome dungeon, from whence he escaped by his own courage, and the remorse of the oppressor. After swimming the broad and rapid stream of the Jihoon, or Oxus, he led, during some months, the life of a vagrant and outlaw, on the borders of the adjacent states. But his fame shone brighter in adversity; he learned to distinguish the friends of his person, the associates of his fortune, and to apply the various characters of men for their advantage, and above all for his own. On his return to his native

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His first adventures,

A. D.

1361.—1370.

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country, Timour was successively joined by the parties of his confederates, who anxiously sought him in the desert; nor can I refuse to describe, in his pathetic simplicity, one of their fortunate encounters. He presented himself as a guide to three chiefs, who were at the head of seventy horse. "When their eyes fell upon me," says Timour, "they were overwhelmed with joy; " and they alighted from their horses; and they " came and kneeled; and they kissed my stir- " rup. I also came down from my horse, and " took each of them in my arms. And I put " my turban on the head of the first chief; and " my girdle, rich in jewels and wrought with " gold, I bound on the loins of the second; and " the third, I clothed in my own coat. And " they wept, and I wept also; and the hour of " prayer was arrived, and we prayed. And we " mounted our horses, and came to my dwell- " ling; and I collected my people, and made a " feast." His trusty bands were soon increased by the bravest of the tribes; he led them against a superior foe; and after some vicissitudes of war; the Getes were finally driven from the kingdom of Tranfoxiana. He had done much for his own glory; but much remained to be done, much art to be exerted, and some blood to be spilt, before he could teach his equals to obey him as their master. The birth and power of the emir Houssein compelled him to accept a vicious and unworthy colleague, whose sister was the best beloved of his wives. Their union

was short and jealous; but the policy of Timour, in their frequent quarrels, exposed his rival to the reproach of injustice and perfidy: and, after a final defeat, Housssein was slain by some sagacious friends, who presumed, for the last time, to disobey the commands of their lord. At the age of thirty-four¹², and in a general diet or *couroultai*, he was invested with *Imperial* command, but he affected to revere the house of Zingis; and while the emir Timour reigned over Zagatai and the East, a nominal khan served as a private officer in the armies of his servant. A fertile kingdom, five hundred miles in length and in breadth, might have satisfied the ambition of a subject; but Timour aspired to the dominion of the world; and before his death, the crown of Zagatai was one of the twenty-seven crowns which he had placed on his head. Without expatiating on the victories of thirty-five campaigns; without describing the lines of march, which he repeatedly traced over the continent of Asia; I shall briefly represent his conquests in, I. Persia, II. Tartary, and, III. India¹³, and from thence proceed to the more interesting narrative of his Ottoman war.

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He ascends
the throne of
Zagatai,
A. D. 1370,
April.

I. For every war, a motive of safety or revenge, of honour or zeal, of right or convenience, may be readily found in the jurisprudence of conquerors. No sooner had Timour reunited to the patrimony of Zagatai the dependent countries of Carizme and Candahar, than he turned his eyes towards the kingdoms of Iran or

His conquests,
A. D.
1370—1400.
I Of Persia,
A. D.
1380—1393.

CHAP. Persia. From the Oxus to the Tigris, that extensive
LXV. country was left without a lawful sovereign since the death of Aboufaid, the last of the descendants of the great Holacou. Peace and justice had been banished from the land above forty years; and the Mogul invader might seem to listen to the cries of an oppressed people. Their petty tyrants might have opposed him with confederate arms: they separately stood, and successively fell; and the difference of their fate was only marked by the promptitude of submission or the obstinacy of resistance. Ibrahim, prince of Shirwan or Albania, kissed the footstool of the Imperial throne. His peace-offerings of silks, horses, and jewels, were composed, according to the Tartar fashion, each article of nine pieces, but a critical spectator observed, that there were only eight slaves. "I myself am the ninth," replied Ibrahim, who was prepared for the remark; and his flattery was rewarded by the smile of Timour¹⁴. Shah Mansour, prince of Fars, or the proper Persia, was one of the least powerful, but most dangerous, of his enemies. In a battle under the walls of Shiray, he broke, with three or four thousand soldiers, the *coul* or main body of thirty thousand horse, where the emperor fought in person. No more than fourteen or fifteen guards remained near the standard of Timour: he stood firm as a rock, and received on his helmet two weighty strokes of a scymetar¹⁵: the Moguls rallied; the head of Mansour was thrown at his feet, and he declared his esteem

esteem of the valour of a foe, by extirpating all the males of so intrepid a race. From Shiray, his troops advanced to the Persian gulf; and the richness and weakness of Ormuz¹⁶ were displayed in an annual tribute of six hundred thousand dinars of gold. Bagdad was no longer the city of peace, the seat of the caliphs; but the noblest conquest of Houlacou could not be overlooked by his ambitious successor. The whole course of the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the sources of those rivers, was reduced to his obedience: he entered Edessa; and the Turk-mans of the black sheep were chastised for the sacrilegious pillage of a caravan of Mecca. In the mountains of Georgia, the native Christians still braved the law and the sword of Mahomet; by three expeditions he obtained the merit of the *gazie*, or holy war; and the prince of Teflis became his profelyte and friend.

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II. A just retaliation might be urged for the invasion of Turkestan, or the eastern Tartary. The dignity of Timour could not endure the impunity of the Getes: he passed the Sihoon, subdued the kingdom of Cashgar, and marched seven times into the heart of their country. His most distant camp was two months journey, or four hundred and eighty leagues to the north-east of Samarcand; and his emirs, who traversed the river Irtysh, engraved in the forests of Siberia a rude memorial of their exploits. The conquest of Kipzak, or the western Tartary¹⁷, was founded on the double motive of aiding the distressed,

II. OF

Turkestan,

A. D.

1370—1383.

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of Kipzak,
Russia, etc.
A. D.
1390—1396.

and chastising the ungrateful. Toctamish, a fugitive prince, was entertained and protected in his court: the ambassadors of Auruz Khan were dismissed with an haughty denial, and followed on the same day by the armies of Zagatai; and their success established Toctamish in the Mogul empire of the north. But after a reign of ten years, the new khan forgot the merits and the strength of his benefactor; the base usurper, as he deemed him, of the sacred rights of the house of Zingis. Through the gates of Derbend, he entered Persia at the head of ninety thousand horse: with the innumerable forces of Kipzak, Bulgaria, Circassia, and Russia, he passed the Sihoon, burnt the palaces of Timour, and compelled him, amidst the winter snows, to contend for Samarcand and his life. After a mild expostulation and a glorious victory, the emperor resolved on revenge: and by the east, and the west, of the Caspian, and the Volga, he twice invaded Kipzak with such mighty powers, that thirteen miles were measured from his right to his left wing. In a march of five months, they rarely beheld the footsteps of man; and their daily subsistence was often trusted to the fortune of the chase. At length the armies encountered each other; but the treachery of the standard-bearer, who, in the heat of action, reversed the Imperial standard of Kipzak, determined the victory of the Zagatais; and Toctamish (I speak the language of the institutions) gave the tribe of Touthi to the wind of desolation¹². He fled to the

Christian duke of Lithuania; again returned to the banks of the Volga; and, after fifteen battles with a domestic rival, at last perished in the wilds of Siberia. The pursuit of a flying enemy carried Timour into the tributary provinces of Russia: a duke of the reigning family was made prisoner amidst the ruins of his capital; and Yeletz, by the pride and ignorance of the Orientals, might easily be confounded with the genuine metropolis of the nation. Moscow trembled at the approach of the Tartar, and the resistance would have been feeble, since the hopes of the Russians were placed in a miraculous image of the Virgin, to whose protection they ascribed the casual and voluntary retreat of the conqueror. Ambition and prudence recalled him to the South, the desolate country was exhausted, and the Mogul soldiers were enriched with an immense spoil of precious furs, of linen of Antioch¹⁹, and of ingots of gold and silver²⁰. On the banks of the Don, or Tanais, he received an humble deputation from the consuls and merchants of Egypt²¹, Venice, Genoa, Catalonia, and Biscay, who occupied the commerce and city of Tana, or Azoph, at the mouth of the river. They offered their gifts, admired his magnificence, and trusted his royal word. But the peaceful visit of an emir, who explored the state of the magazines and harbour, was speedily followed by the destructive presence of the Tartars. The city was reduced to ashes; the Moslems were pillaged and dismissed; but all the Christians, who had not

C H A P. fled to their ships, were condemned either to
 LXV. death or slavery²². Revenge prompted him to burn the cities of Serai and Astrachan, the monuments of rising civilization; and his vanity proclaimed, that he had penetrated to the region of perpetual daylight, a strange phenomenon, which authorized his Mahometan doctors to dispense with the obligation of evening prayer²³.

III OF
 Hindostan,
 A. D.
 1398, 1399.

III. When Timour first proposed to his princes and emirs the invasion of India or Hindostan²⁴, he was answered by a murmur of discontent: "The rivers! and the mountains and deserts!" "and the soldiers clad in armour!" and the "elephants, destroyers of men!" But the displeasure of the emperor was more dreadful than all these terrors; and his superior reason was convinced, that an enterprise of such tremendous aspect was safe and easy in the execution. He was informed by his spies of the weakness and anarchy of Hindostan: the Soubahs of the provinces had erected the standard of rebellion; and the perpetual infancy of sultan Mahmoud was despised even in the haram of Delhi. The Mogul army moved in three great divisions: and Timour observes with pleasure, that the ninety-two squadrons of a thousand horse most fortunately corresponded with the ninety-two names or epithets of the prophet Mahomet. Between the Jihoon and the Indus, they crossed one of the ridges of mountains, which are styled by the Arabian geographers the stony girdles of the earth. The highland robbers were subdued or extirpated; but great numbers of men and horses

perished in the snow; the emperor himself was let down a precipice on a portable scaffold, the ropes were one hundred and fifty cubits in length; and, before he could reach the bottom, this dangerous operation was five times repeated. Timour crossed the Indus at the ordinary passage of Attok; and successively traversed, in the footsteps of Alexander, the *Punjab*, or five rivers²⁵, that fall into the master-stream. From Attok to Delhi, the high road measures no more than six hundred miles: but the two conquerors deviated to the south-east; and the motive of Timour was to join his grandson, who had achieved by his command the conquest of Moultan. On the eastern bank of the Hyphasis, on the edge of the desert, the Macedonian hero halted and wept: the Mogul entered the desert, reduced the fortress of Batnir, and stood in arms before the gates of Delhi, a great and flourishing city, which had subsisted three centuries under the dominion of the Mahometan kings. The siege, more especially of the castle, might have been a work of time; but he tempted, by the appearance of weakness, the sultan Mahmoud and his vizir to descend into the plain, with ten thousand cuirassiers, forty thousand of his foot-guards, and one hundred and twenty elephants, whose tusks are said to have been armed with sharp and poisoned daggers. Against these monsters, or rather against the imagination of his troops, he condescended to use some extraordinary precautions of fire and a ditch, of iron spikes and a rampart of bucklers;

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but the event taught the Moguls to smile at their own fears; and, as soon as these unwieldy animals were routed, the inferior species (the men of India) disappeared from the field. Timour made his triumphal entry into the capital of Hindostan; and admired, with a view to imitate, the architecture of the stately mosch; but the order or licence of a general pillage and massacre polluted the festival of his victory. He resolved to purify his soldiers in the blood of the idolaters, or Gentoos, who still surpass, in the proportion of ten to one, the numbers of the Moslems. In this pious design, he advanced one hundred miles to the north-east of Delhi, passed the Ganges, fought several battles by land and water, and penetrated to the famous rock of Coupele, the statue of the cow, that *seems* to discharge the mighty river, whose source is far distant among the mountains of Thibet²⁶. His return was along the skirts of the northern hills; nor could this rapid campaign of one year justify the strange foresight of his emirs, that their children in a warm climate would degenerate into a race of Hindoos.

His war
against Sultan
Bajazet,
A. D. 1400.
September 1.

It was on the banks of the Ganges that Timour was informed, by his speedy messengers, of the disturbances which had arisen on the confines of Georgia and Anatolia, of the revolt of the Christians, and the ambitious designs of the sultan Bajazet. His vigour of mind and body was not impaired by sixty-three years, and innumerable fatigues; and, after enjoying some tranquil months

in the palace of Samarcand, he proclaimed a new expedition of seven years into the western countries of Asia²⁷. To the soldiers who had served in the Indian war, he granted the choice of remaining at home or following their prince; but the troops of all the provinces and kingdoms of Persia were commanded to assemble at Ispahan, and wait the arrival of the Imperial standard. It was first directed against the Christians of Georgia, who were strong only in their rocks, their castles, and the winter season; but these obstacles were overcome by the zeal and perseverance of Timour: the rebels submitted to the tribute or the Koran; and if both religions boasted of their martyrs, that name is more justly due to the Christian prisoners, who were offered the choice of abjuration or death. On his descent from the hills, the emperor gave audience to the first ambassadors of Bajazet, and opened the hostile correspondence of complaints and menaces; which fermented two years before the final explosion. Between two jealous and haughty neighbours, the motives of quarrel will seldom be wanting. The Mogul and Ottoman conquests now touched each other in the neighbourhood of Erzeroum, and the Euphrates; nor had the doubtful limit been ascertained by time and treaty. Each of these ambitious monarchs might accuse his rival of violating his territory; of threatening his vassals; and protecting his rebels; and, by the name of rebels, each understood the fugitive princes, whose kingdoms he had usurped, and whose life

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or liberty he implacably pursued. The resemblance of character was still more dangerous than the opposition of interest; and in their victorious career, Timour was impatient of an equal, and Bajazet was ignorant of a superior. The first epistle²⁸ of the Mogul emperor must have provoked, instead of reconciling the Turkish sultan; whose family and nation he affected to despise²⁹.
 “Dost thou not know, that the greatest part of
 “Asia is subject to our arms and our laws? that
 “our invincible forces extend from one sea to
 “the other? that the potentates of the earth
 “form a line before our gate? and that we have
 “compelled fortune herself to watch over the
 “prosperity of our empire? What is the founda-
 “tion of thy insolence and folly? Thou hast
 “fought some battles in the woods of Anatolia;
 “contemptible trophies! Thou hast obtained
 “some victories over the Christians of Europe;
 “thy sword was blessed by the apostle of God;
 “and thy obedience to the precept of the Koran,
 “in waging war against the infidels, is the sole
 “consideration that prevents us from destroying
 “thy country, the frontier and bulwark of the
 “Moslem world. Be wise in time; reflect, repent;
 “and avert the thunder of our vengeance, which
 “is yet suspended over thy head. Thou art no
 “more than a pismire; why wilt thou seek to
 “provoke the elephants? Alas, they will trample
 “thee under their feet.” In his replies, Bajazet
 poured forth the indignation of a soul which was
 deeply stung by such unusual contempt. After

retorting the basest reproaches on the thief and rebel of the desert, the Ottoman recapitulates his boasted victories in Iran, Touran, and the Indies; and labours to prove, that Timour had never triumphed unless by his own perfidy and the vices of his foes. “Thy armies are innumerable: be they so; but what are the arrows of the flying Tartar against the scymetars and battle-axes of my firm and invincible Janizaries? I will guard the princes who have implored my protection: seek them in my tents. The cities of Arzingan and Erzeroum are mine, and unless the tribute be duly paid, I will demand the arrears under the walls of Tauris and Sultania.” The ungovernable rage of the sultan at length betrayed him to an insult of a more domestic kind. “If I fly from thy arms,” said he, “may *my* wives be thrice divorced from my bed: but if thou hast not courage to meet me in the field, mayest thou again receive *thy* wives after they have thrice endured the embraces of a stranger³⁰.” Any violation by word or deed of the secrecy of the Haram is an unpardonable offence among the Turkish nations²¹; and the political quarrel of the two monarchs was embittered by private and personal resentment. Yet in his first expedition, Timour was satisfied with the siege and destruction of Siwas or Sebaste, a strong city on the borders of Anatolia; and he revenged the indiscretion of the Ottoman, on a garrison of four thousand Armenians, who were buried alive for the brave and

CHAP. faithful discharge of their duty. As a Musulman
 LXV. he seemed to respect the pious occupation of Bajazet, who was still engaged in the blockade of Constantinople: and after this salutary lesson, the Mogul conqueror checked his pursuit, and turned aside to the invasion of Syria and Egypt. In these transactions, the Ottoman prince, by the Orientals, and even by Timour, is styled the *Kaïssar of Roum*, the Cæsar of the Romans: a title which, by a small anticipation, might be given to a monarch who possessed the provinces, and threatened the city, of the successors of Constantine ³².

Timour in-
 vades Syria,
 A. D. 1400.

The military republic of the Mamalukes still reigned in Egypt and Syria: but the dynasty of the Turks was overthrown by that of the Circassians ³³; and their favourite Barkok, from a slave and a prisoner, was raised and restored to the throne. In the midst of rebellion and discord, he braved the menaces, corresponded with the enemies, and detained the ambassadors, of the Mogul, who patiently expected his decease, to revenge the crimes of the father on the feeble reign of his son Farage. The Syrian emirs ³⁴ were assembled at Aleppo to repel the invasion: they confided in the fame and discipline of the Mamalukes, in the temper of their swords and lances of the purest steel of Damascus, in the strength of their walled cities, and in the populousness of sixty thousand villages: and instead of sustaining a siege, they threw open their gates, and arrayed their forces in the plain. But these

forces were not cemented by virtue and union; and some powerful emirs had been seduced to desert or betray their more loyal companions. Timour's front was covered with a line of Indian elephants, whose turrets were filled with archers and Greek fire: the rapid evolutions of his cavalry completed the dismay and disorder; the Syrian crowds fell back on each other; many thousands were stifled or slaughtered in the entrance of the great street; the Moguls entered with the fugitives; and, after a short defence, the citadel, the impregnable citadel of Aleppo, was surrendered by cowardice or treachery. Among the suppliants and captives, Timour distinguished the doctors of the law, whom he invited to the dangerous honour of a personal conference³⁵. The Mogul prince was a zealous Musulman; but his Persian schools had taught him to revere the memory of Ali and Hosein; and he had imbibed a deep prejudice against the Syrians, as the enemies of the son of the daughter of the apostle of God. To these doctors he proposed a captious question, which the casuists of Bochara, Samarcand, and Herat, were incapable of resolving. "Who are the true martyrs, of those who are slain on my side, or on that of my enemies?" But he was silenced, or satisfied, by the dexterity of one of the cadhis of Aleppo, who replied, in the words of Mahomet himself, that the motive, not the ensign, constitutes the martyr; and that the Moslems of either party, who fight only for the glory of God, may deserve that sacred

Sacks Alep-
po,
A. D. 1400,
Nov. 11.

C H A P. appellation. The true succession of the caliphs was
 LXV. a controversy of a still more delicate nature and
 the frankness of a doctor, too honest for his
 situation, provoked the emperor to exclaim,
 “Ye are as false as those of Damascus: Moa-
 “wiyah was an usurper, Yezid a tyrant, and
 “Ali alone is the lawful successor of the prophet.”
 A prudent explanation restored his tranquillity;
 and he passed to a more familiar topic of conver-
 sation. “What is your age?” said he to the
 cadhi. “Fifty years.” — “It would be the age
 “of my eldest son: you see me here (continued
 “Timour) a poor, lame, decrepit mortal. Yet
 “by my arm has the Almighty been pleased to
 “subdue the kingdoms of Iran, Touran, and
 “the Indies. I am not a man of blood; and
 “God is my witness, that in all my wars I have
 “never been the aggressor, and that my enemies
 “have always been the authors of their own
 “calamity.” During this peaceful conversation,
 the streets of Aleppo streamed with blood, and
 re-echoed with the cries of mothers and children,
 with the shrieks of violated virgins. The rich
 plunder that was abandoned to his soldiers might
 stimulate their avarice; but their cruelty was en-
 forced by the peremptory command of producing
 an adequate number of heads, which, according
 to his custom, were curiously piled in columns
 and pyramids: the Moguls celebrated the feast
 of victory, while the surviving Moslems passed
 the night in tears and in chains. I shall not dwell
 on the march of the destroyer from Aleppo to

Damascus, where he was rudely encountered, and almost overthrown, by the armies of Egypt. A retrograde motion was imputed to his distress and despair: one of his nephews deserted to the enemy; and Syria rejoiced in the tale of his defeat, when the sultan was driven by the revolt of the Mamalukes to escape with precipitation and shame to his palace of Cairo. Abandoned by their prince, the inhabitants of Damascus still defended their walls; and Timour consented to raise the siege, if they would adorn his retreat with a gift or ransom; each article of nine pieces. But no sooner had he introduced himself into the city, under colour of a truce, than he perfidiously violated the treaty; imposed a contribution of ten millions of gold; and animated his troops to chastise the posterity of those Syrians who had executed, or approved, the murder of the grandson of Mahomet. A family which had given honourable burial to the head of Hosein, and a colony of artificers whom he sent to labour at Samarcand, were alone reserved in the general massacre; and, after a period of seven centuries, Damascus was reduced to ashes, because a Tartar was moved by religious zeal to avenge the blood of an Arab. The losses and fatigues of the campaign obliged Timour to renounce the conquest of Palestine and Egypt; but in his return to the Euphrates, he delivered Aleppo to the flames; and justified his pious motive by the pardon and reward of two thousand sectaries of Ali, who were desirous to visit the

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Damascus,
A. D. 1401,
January 23.

C H A P. tomb of his son. I have expatiated on the
 LXV. personal anecdotes which mark the character of
 the Mogul hero; but I shall briefly mention³⁶,
 and Bagdad, that he erected on the ruins of Bagdad a pyramid of
 A. D. 1401, ninety thousand heads; again visited Georgia; en-
 July 23. camped on the banks of the Araxes; and proclaim-
 ed his resolution of marching against the Ottoman
 emperor. Conscious of the importance of the
 war, he collected his forces from every province:
 eight hundred thousand men were enrolled on
 his military list³⁷; but the splendid commands of
 five, and ten, thousand horse, may be rather
 expressive of the rank and pension of the chiefs,
 than of the genuine number of effective soldiers³⁸.
 In the pillage of Syria, the Moguls had acquired
 immense riches: but the delivery of their pay
 and arrears for seven years, more firmly attached
 them to the Imperial standard.

Invades Ana-
 tolia,
 A. D. 1402.

During this diversion of the Mogul arms,
 Bajazet had two years to collect his forces for a
 more serious encounter. They consisted of four
 hundred thousand horse and foot³⁹, whose merit
 and fidelity were of an unequal complexion.
 We may discriminate the Janizaries who have
 been gradually raised to an establishment of forty
 thousand men; a national cavalry, the Spahis of
 modern times; twenty thousand cuirassiers of
 Europe, clad in black and impenetrable armour;
 the troops of Anatolia, whose princes had
 taken refuge in the camp of Timour, and a
 colony of Tartars, whom he had driven from
 Kipzak, and to whom Bajazet had assigned a

settlement in the plains of Adrianople. The fearless confidence of the sultan urged him to meet his antagonist; and, as if he had chosen that spot for revenge, he displayed his banners near the ruins of the unfortunate Suvas. In the mean while, Timour moved from the Araxes through the countries of Armenia and Anatolia: his boldness was secured by the wisest precautions; his speed was guided by order and discipline; and the woods, the mountains, and the rivers, were diligently explored by the flying squadrons, who marked his road and preceded his standard. Firm in his plan of fighting in the heart of the Ottoman kingdom, he avoided their camp; dextrously inclined to the left; occupied Cæsarea; traversed the salt desert and the river Halys; and invested Angora: while the sultan, immoveable and ignorant in his post, compared the Tartar swiftness to the crawling of a snail⁴⁰: he returned on the wings of indignation to the relief of Angora; and as both generals were alike impatient for action, the plains round that city were the scene of a memorable battle, which has immortalised the glory of Timour and the shame of Bajazet. For this signal victory, the Mogul emperor was indebted to himself, to the genius of the moment, and the discipline of thirty years. He had improved the tactics, without violating the manners, of his nation⁴¹, whose force still consisted in the missile weapons, and rapid evolutions, of a numerous cavalry. From a single troop to a great army, the mode of attack

Battle of
Angora,
A. D. 1402,
July 28.

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was the same : a foremost line first advanced to the charge, and was supported in a just order by the squadrons of the great vanguard. The general's eye watched over the field, and at his command the front and rear of the right and left wings successively moved forwards in their several divisions, and in a direct or oblique line: the enemy was pressed by eighteen or twenty attacks; and each attack afforded a chance of victory. If they all proved fruitless or unsuccessful, the occasion was worthy of the emperor himself, who gave the signal of advancing to the standard and main body, which he led in person ⁴². But in the battle of Angora, the main body itself was supported, on the flanks and in the rear, by the bravest squadrons of the reserve, commanded by the sons and grandsons of Timour. The conqueror of Hindostan ostentatiously shewed a line of elephants, the trophies, rather than the instruments, of victory: the use of the Greek fire was familiar to the Moguls and Ottomans: but had they borrowed from Europe the recent invention of gunpowder and cannon, the artificial thunder, in the hands of either nation, must have turned the fortune of the day ⁴³. In that day, Bajazet displayed the qualities of a soldier and a chief: but his genius sunk under a stronger ascendant; and from various motives, the greatest part of his troops failed him in the decisive moment. His rigour and avarice had provoked a mutiny among the Turks; and even his son Soliman too
 hastily

hastily withdrew from the field. The forces of Anatolia, loyal in their revolt, were drawn away to the banners of their lawful princes. His Tartar allies had been tempted by the letters and emissaries of Timour⁴⁴; who reproached their ignoble servitude under the slaves of their fathers; and offered to their hopes the dominion of their new, or the liberty of their ancient, country. In the right wing of Bajazet, the cuirassiers of Europe charged, with faithful hearts and irresistible arms; but these men of iron were soon broken by an artful flight and headlong pursuit: and the Janizaries, alone, without cavalry or missile weapons, were encompassed by the circle of the Mogul hunters. Their valour was at length oppressed by heat, thirst, and the weight of numbers; and the unfortunate sultan, afflicted with the gout in his hands and feet, was transported from the field on the fleetest of his horses. He was pursued and taken by the titular khan of Zagatai; and, after his capture, and the defeat of the Ottoman powers, the kingdom of Anatolia submitted to the conqueror, who planted his standard at Kiotahia, and dispersed on all sides the ministers of rapine and destruction. Mirza Mehemmed Sultan, the eldest and best beloved of his grandsons, was dispatched to Bursa with thirty thousand horse: and such was his youthful ardour, that he arrived with only four thousand at the gates of the capital, after performing in five days a march of two hundred and thirty miles. Yet fear is still more

Defeat and
captivity of
Bajazet.

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rapid in its course: and Soliman, the son of Bajazet, had already passed over to Europe with the royal treasure. The spoil, however, of the palace and city was immense: the inhabitants had escaped; but the buildings, for the most part of wood, were reduced to ashes. From Bursa, the grandson of Timour advanced to Nice, even yet a fair and flourishing city; and the Mogul squadrons were only stopped by the waves of the Propontis. The same success attended the other mirzas and emirs in their excursions: and Smyrna, defended by the zeal and courage of the Rhodian knights, alone deserved the presence of the emperor himself. After an obstinate defence, the place was taken by storm; all that breathed was put to the sword; and the heads of the Christian heroes were launched from the engines, on board of two carracks, or great ships of Europe, that rode at anchor in the harbour. The Moslems of Asia rejoiced in their deliverance from a dangerous and domestic foe, and a parallel was drawn between the two rivals, by observing that Timour, in fourteen days, had reduced a fortress which had sustained seven years the siege, or at least the blockade, of Bajazet⁴⁵.

The story of
his iron cage

The *iron cage* in which Bajazet was imprisoned by Tamerlane, so long and so often repeated as a moral lesson, is now rejected as a fable by the modern writers, who smile at the vulgar credulity⁴⁶. They appeal with confidence to the Persian history of Sherefeddin Ali, which has been

given to our curiosity in a French version, and from which I shall collect and abridge a more specious narrative of this memorable transaction.

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No sooner was Timour informed that the captive Ottoman was at the door of his tent, than he graciously stepped forwards to receive him, seated him by his side, and mingled with just reproaches a soothing pity for his rank and misfortune. "Alas!" said the emperor, "the decree of fate is now accomplished by your own fault: it is the web which you have woven, the thorns of the tree which yourself have planted. I wished to spare, and even to assist, the champion of the Moslems: you braved our threats; you despised our friendship; you forced us to enter your kingdom with our invincible armies. Behold the event. Had you vanquished, I am not ignorant of the fate which you reserved for myself and my troops. But I disdain to retaliate: your life and honour are secure; and I shall express my gratitude to God by my clemency to man." The royal captive shewed some signs of repentance, accepted the humiliation of a robe of honour, and embraced with tears his son Moufa, who, at his request, was sought and found among the captives of the field. The Ottoman princes were lodged in a splendid pavilion; and the respect of the guards could be surpassed only by their vigilance. On the arrival of the haram from Bursa, Timour restored the queen Despina and her daughter to their father and husband; but he piously required,

disproved by
the Persian
historian of
Timour;

CHAP. LXV. that the Servian princeſs, who had hitherto been indulged in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſhould embrace without delay the religion of the prophet. In the feaſt of victory, to which Bajazet was invited, the Mogul emperor placed a crown on his head and a ſceptre in his hand, with a ſolemn aſſurance of reſtoring him with an increaſe of glory to the throne of his anceſtors. But the effect of this promiſe was diſappointed by the ſultan's untimely death: amidſt the care of the moſt ſkilful phyſicians, he expired of an apoplexy at Akſhehr, the Antioch of Piſidia, about nine months after his defeat. The victor dropped a tear over his grave; his body, with royal pomp, was conveyed to the maſoleum which he had erected at Burſa; and his ſon Mouſa, after receiving a rich preſent of gold and jewels, of horſes and arms, was inveſted by a patent in red ink with the kingdom of Anatolia.

Such is the portrait of a generous conqueror, which has been extracted from his own memoirs, and dedicated to his ſon and grandſon, nineteen years after his deceaſe⁴⁷; and, at a time when the truth was remembered by thouſands, a manifeſt falſehood would have implied a ſatire on his real conduct. Weighty indeed is this evidence, adopted by all the Perſian hiſtories⁴⁸; yet flattery, more eſpecially in the Eaſt, is baſe and audacious; and the harſh and ignominious treatment of Bajazet is atteſted by a chain of witneſſes, ſome of whom ſhall be produced in the order of their time and country. 1. The reader has not

atteſted,
1. by the
French;

forgot the garrison of French, whom the marshal Boucicault left behind him for the defence of Constantinople. They were on the spot to receive the earliest and most faithful intelligence of the overthrow of their great adversary; and it is more than probable, that some of them accompanied the Greek embassy to the camp of Tamerlane. From their account, the *hardships* of the prison and death of Bajazet are affirmed by the marshal's servant and historian, within the distance of seven years ¹⁹. 2. The name of Poggius the Italian ²⁰ is deservedly famous among the revivers of learning in the fifteenth century. His elegant dialogue on the vicissitudes of fortune ²¹ was composed in his fiftieth year, twenty-eight years after the Turkish victory of Tamerlane ²²; whom he celebrates as not inferior to the illustrious Barbarians of antiquity. Of his exploits and discipline Poggius was informed by several ocular witnesses; nor does he forget an example so apposite to his theme as the Ottoman monarch, whom the Scythian confined like a wild beast in an iron cage, and exhibited a spectacle to Asia. I might add the authority of two Italian chronicles, perhaps of an earlier date, which would prove at least that the same story, whether false or true, was imported into Europe with the first tidings of the revolution ²³. 3. At the time when Poggius flourished at Rome, Ahmed Ebn Arabshah composed at Damascus the florid and malevolent history of Timour, for which he had collected materials in his journies over Turkey

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LXV.2. by the
Italians;3. by the
Arabs;

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4. by the
Greeks;

and Tartary⁴. Without any possible correspondence between the Latin and the Arabian writer, they agree in the fact of the iron cage; and their agreement is a striking proof of their common veracity. Ahmed Arabshah likewise relates another outrage, which Bajazet endured, of a more domestic and tender nature. His indiscreet mention of women and divorces was deeply resented by the jealous Tartar: in the feast of victory, the wine was served by female cupbearers, and the sultan beheld his own concubines and wives confounded among the slaves, and exposed without a veil to the eyes of intemperance. To escape a similar indignity, it is said, that his successors, except in a single instance, have abstained from legitimate nuptials; and the Ottoman practice and belief, at least in the sixteenth century, is attested by the observing Busbequius⁵, ambassador from the court of Vienna to the great Soliman. 4. Such is the separation of language, that the testimony of a Greek is not less independent than that of a Latin or an Arab. I suppress the names of Chalcondyles and Ducas, who flourished in a later period, and who speak in a less positive tone; but more attention is due to George Phranza⁶, protovestiare of the last emperors, and who was born a year before the battle of Angora. Twenty-two years after that event, he was sent ambassador to Amurath the second; and the historian might converse with some veteran Janizaries, who had been made prisoners with the sultan, and had themselves seen

him in his iron cage. 5. The last evidence, in every sense, is that of the Turkish annals, which have been consulted or transcribed by Leunclavius, Pocock, and Cantemir⁵⁷: They unanimously deplore the captivity of the iron cage; and some credit may be allowed to national historians, who cannot stigmatize the Tartar without uncovering the shame of their king and country.

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5. by the
Turks.

From these opposite premises, a fair and moderate conclusion may be deduced. I am satisfied that Sherefeddin Ali has faithfully described the first ostentatious interview, in which the conqueror, whose spirits were harmonised by success, affected the character of generosity. But his mind was insensibly alienated by the unseasonable arrogance of Bajazet; the complaints of his enemies, the Anatolian princes, were just and vehement; and Timour betrayed a design of leading his royal captive in triumph to Samarcand. An attempt to facilitate his escape, by digging a mine under the tent, provoked the Mogul emperor to impose a harsher restraint; and in his perpetual marches, an iron cage on a waggon might be invented, not as a wanton insult, but as a rigorous precaution. Timour had read in some fabulous history a similar treatment of one of his predecessors, a king of Persia; and Bajazet was condemned to represent the person, and expiate the guilt, of the Roman Cæsar⁵⁸. But the strength of his mind and body fainted under the trial, and his premature death might, without

Probable
conclusion.

Death of
Bajazet,
A. D. 1403,
March 2.

C H A P. injustice, be ascribed to the severity of Timour.
 LXV. He warred not with the dead; a tear and a sepulchre were all that he could bestow on a captive who was delivered from his power; and if Moufa, the son of Bajazet, was permitted to reign over the ruins of Bursa, the greatest part of the province of Anatolia had been restored by the conqueror to their lawful sovereigns.

Term of the
 conquests of
 Timour,
 A. D. 1403.

From the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to Damascus and the Archipelago, Asia was in the hand of Timour; his armies were invincible, his ambition was boundless, and his zeal might aspire to conquer and convert the Christian kingdoms of the West, which already trembled at his name. He touched the utmost verge of the land; but an insuperable, though narrow, sea rolled between the two continents of Europe and Asia⁹; and the lord of so many *tomans*, or myriads, of horse, was not master of a single galley. The two passages of the Bosphorus and Hellespont, of Constantinople and Gallipoli, were possessed, the one by the Christians, the other by the Turks. On this great occasion, they forgot the difference of religion to act with union and firmness in the common cause: the double straits were guarded with ships and fortifications; and they separately withheld the transports, which Timour demanded of either nation, under the pretence of attacking their enemy. At the same time, they soothed his pride with tributary gifts and suppliant embassies, and prudently tempted him to retreat

with the honours of victory. Soliman, the son of Bajazet, implored his clemency for his father and himself; accepted, by a red patent, the investiture of the kingdom of Romania, which he already held by the sword; and reiterated his ardent wish, of casting himself in person at the feet of the king of the world. The Greek emperor⁶⁰ (either John or Manuel) submitted to pay the same tribute which he had stipulated with the Turkish sultan, and ratified the treaty by an oath of allegiance, from which he could absolve his conscience so soon as the Mogul arms had retired from Anatolia. But the fears and fancy of nations ascribed to the ambitious Tamerlane a new design of vast and romantic compass; a design of subduing Egypt and Africa, marching from the Nile to the Atlantic Ocean, entering Europe by the Streights of Gibraltar, and, after imposing his yoke on the kingdoms of Christendom, of returning home by the deserts of Russia and Tartary. This remote, and perhaps imaginary, danger was averted by the submission of the sultan of Egypt: the honours of the prayer and the coin, attested at Cairo the supremacy of Timour; and a rare gift of a *giraffe*, or camopard, and nine ostriches, represented at Samarcand the tribute of the African world. Our imagination is not less astonished by the portrait of a Mogul, who, in his camp before Smyrna, meditates and almost accomplishes the invasion of the Chinese empire⁹¹. Timour was urged to this enterprise by national honour and religious

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zeal. The torrents which he had shed of Muslim blood could be expiated only by an equal destruction of the infidels; and as he now stood at the gates of paradise, he might best secure his glorious entrance by demolishing the idols of China, founding moschs in every city, and establishing the profession of faith in one God, and his prophet Mahomet. The recent expulsion of the house of Zingis was an insult on the Mogul name; and the disorders of the empire afforded the fairest opportunity for revenge. The illustrious Hongvou, founder of the dynasty of *Ming*, died four years before the battle of Angora; and his grandson, a weak and unfortunate youth, was burnt in his palace, after a million of Chinese had perished in the civil war⁶². Before he evacuated Anatolia, Timour dispatched beyond the Sihoon a numerous army, or rather colony, of his old and new subjects, to open the road, to subdue the Pagan Calmucks and Mungals, and to found cities and magazines in the desert; and, by the diligence of his lieutenant, he soon received a perfect map and description of the unknown regions, from the source of the Irtilsh to the wall of China. During these preparations, the emperor atchieved the final conquest of Georgia; passed the winter on the banks of the Araxes; appeased the troubles of Persia; and slowly returned to his capital, after a campaign of four years and nine months.

His triumph
at Samar-
cand,

On the throne of Samarcand⁶³, he displayed in a short repose his magnificence and power;

listened to the complaints of the people; distributed a just measure of rewards and punishments; employed his riches in the architecture of palaces and temples; and gave audience to the ambassadors of Egypt, Arabia, India, Tartary, Russia, and Spain, the last of whom presented a suit of tapestry which eclipsed the pencil of the Oriental artists. The marriage of six of the emperor's grandsons was esteemed an act of religion, as well as of paternal tenderness; and the pomp of the ancient caliphs was revived in their nuptials. They were celebrated in the gardens of Canighul, decorated with innumerable tents and pavilions, which displayed the luxury of a great city and the spoils of a victorious camp. Whole forests were cut down to supply fuel for the kitchens; the plain was spread with pyramids of meat, and vases of every liquor, to which thousands of guests were courteously invited: the orders of the state, and the nations of the earth, were marshalled at the royal banquet; nor were the ambassadors of Europe (says the haughty Persian) excluded from the feast; since even the *casses*, the smallest of fish, find their place in the ocean⁶⁴. The public joy was testified by illuminations and masquerades; the trades of Samarcand passed in review; and every trade was emulous to execute some quaint device, some marvellous pageant, with the materials of their peculiar art. After the marriage-contracts had been ratified by the cadhis, the bridegrooms and their brides retired to the nuptial chambers; nine times, according

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July —

A. D. 1405,

January 8.

CHAP. to the Asiatic fashion, they were dressed and
 LXV. undressed; and at each change of apparel, pearls
 and rubies were showered on their heads, and
 contemptuously abandoned to their attendants.
 A general indulgence was proclaimed: every law
 was relaxed, every pleasure was allowed; the
 people was free, the sovereign was idle; and
 the historian of Timour may remark, that, after
 devoting fifty years to the attainment of empire,
 the only happy period of his life were the two
 months in which he ceased to exercise his power.
 But he was soon awakened to the cares of govern-
 ment and war. The standard was unfurled for
 the invasion of China: the emirs made their report
 of two hundred thousand, the select and veteran
 foldiers of Iran and Touran: their baggage and
 provisions were transported by five hundred great
 waggons, and an immense train of horses and
 camels; and the troops might prepare for a long
 absence, since more than six months were employed
 in the tranquil journey of a caravan from Samar-
 cand to Pekin. Neither age, nor the severity of the
 winter, could retard the impatience of Timour; he
 mounted on horseback, passed the Sihoon on the
 ice, marched seventy-six parasangs, three hundred
 miles, from his capital, and pitched his last camp
 in the neighbourhood of Otrar, where he was
 expected by the angel of death. Fatigue, and
 the indiscreet use of iced water, accelerated the
 progress of his fever; and the conqueror of Asia
 expired in the seventieth year of his age, thirty-

His death on
 the road to
 China,
 A. D. 1405,
 April 1.

five years after he had ascended the throne of Zagatai. His designs were lost; his armies were disbanded; China was saved; and fourteen years after his decease, the most powerful of his children sent an embassy of friendship and commerce to the court of Pekin⁶⁵.

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The fame of Timour has pervaded the East and West; his posterity is still invested with the Imperial *title*; and the admiration of his subjects, who revered him almost as a deity, may be justified in some degree by the praise or confession of his bitterest enemies⁶⁶. Although he was lame of an hand and foot, his form and stature were not unworthy of his rank; and his vigorous health, so essential to himself and to the world, was corroborated by temperance and exercise. In his familiar discourse he was grave and modest, and if he was ignorant of the Arabic language, he spoke with fluency and elegance the Persian and Turkish idioms. It was his delight to converse with the learned on topics of history and science; and the amusement of his leisure hours was the game of chess, which he improved or corrupted with new refinements⁶⁷. In his religion, he was a zealous, though not perhaps an orthodox, Musulman⁶⁸; but his sound understanding may tempt us to believe, that a superstitious reverence for omens and prophecies, for saints and astrologers, was only affected as an instrument of policy. In the government of a vast empire, he stood alone and absolute, without a rebel to oppose his power, a favourite to seduce his

Character
and merits of
Timour.

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affections, or a minister to mislead his judgment.

It was his firmest maxim, that whatever might be the consequence, the word of the prince should never be disputed or recalled; but his foes have maliciously observed, that the commands of anger and destruction were more strictly executed than those of beneficence and favour. His sons and grandsons, of whom Timour left six-and-thirty at his decease, were his first and most submissive subjects; and whenever they deviated from their duty, they were corrected, according to the laws of Zingis, with the bastonade, and afterwards restored to honour and command. Perhaps his heart was not devoid of the social virtues; perhaps he was not incapable of loving his friends and pardoning his enemies; but the rules of morality are founded on the public interest; and it may be sufficient to applaud the *wisdom* of a monarch, for the liberality by which he is not impoverished, and for the justice by which he is strengthened and enriched. To maintain the harmony of authority and obedience, to chastise the proud, to protect the weak, to reward the deserving, to banish vice and idleness from his dominions, to secure the traveller and merchant, to restrain the depredations of the foldier, to cherish the labours of the husbandman, to encourage industry and learning, and, by an equal and moderate assessment, to increase the revenue, without increasing the taxes, are indeed the duties of a prince; but, in the discharge of these duties, he finds an ample and immediate

recompence. Timour might boast, that at his accession to the throne, Asia was the prey of anarchy and rapine, whilst under his prosperous monarchy a child, fearless and unhurt, might carry a purse of gold from the East to the West. Such was his confidence of merit, that from this reformation he derived an excuse for his victories, and a title to universal dominion. The four following observations will serve to appreciate his claim to the public gratitude; and perhaps we shall conclude, that the Mogul emperor was rather the scourge than the benefactor of mankind.

1. If some partial disorders, some local oppressions, were healed by the sword of Timour, the remedy was far more pernicious than the disease. By their rapine, cruelty, and discord, the petty tyrants of Persia might afflict their subjects; but whole nations were crushed under the footsteps of the reformer. The ground which had been occupied by flourishing cities, was often marked by his abominable trophies, by columns, or pyramids, of human heads. Astracan, Carizme, Delhi, Ispahan, Bagdad, Aleppo, Damascus, Bursa, Smyrna, and a thousand others, were sacked, or burnt, or utterly destroyed, in his presence, and by his troops; and perhaps his conscience would have been startled, if a priest or philosopher had dared to number the millions of victims whom he had sacrificed to the establishment of peace and order⁶⁹.

2. His most destructive wars were rather inroads than conquests. He invaded Turkestan, Kipzak, Russia, Hindostan,

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Syria, Anatolia, Armenia, and Georgia, without a hope or a desire of preserving those distant provinces. From thence he departed, laden with spoil; but he left behind him neither troops to awe the contumacious, nor magistrates to protect the obedient, natives. When he had broken the fabric of their ancient government, he abandoned them to the evils which his invasion had aggravated or caused; nor were these evils compensated by any present or possible benefits. 3. The kingdoms of Tranfoxiana and Persia were the proper field which he laboured to cultivate and adorn, as the perpetual inheritance of his family. But his peaceful labours were often interrupted, and sometimes blasted, by the absence of the conqueror. While he triumphed on the Volga or the Ganges, his servants, and even his sons, forgot their master and their duty. The public and private injuries were poorly redressed by the tardy rigour of enquiry and punishment; and we must be content to praise the *Institutions* of Timour, as the specious idea of a perfect monarchy. 4. Whatever might be the blessings of his administration, they evaporated with his life. To reign, rather than to govern, was the ambition of his children and grandchildren⁷⁰; the enemies of each other and of the people. A fragment of the empire was upheld with some glory by Sharokh his youngest son; but after *his* decease, the scene was again involved in darkness and blood; and before the end of a century, Tranfoxiana and Persia were trampled by the Uzbeks from the north,

north, and the Turkmans of the black and white sheep. The race of Timour would have been extinct, if an hero, his descendant in the fifth degree, had not fled before the Uzbek arms to the conquest of Hindostan. His successors (the great Moguls ⁷¹) extended their sway from the mountains of Cashmir to Cape Comorin, and from Candahar to the gulf of Bengal. Since the reign of Aurungzebe, their empire has been dissolved; their treasures of Delhi have been rifled by a Persian robber; and the richest of their kingdoms is now possessed by a company of Christian merchants, of a remote island in the Northern ocean.

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Far different was the fate of the Ottoman monarchy. The massy trunk was bent to the ground, but no sooner did the hurricane pass away, that it again rose with fresh vigour and more lively vegetation. When Timour, in every sense, had evacuated Anatolia, he left the cities without a palace, a treasure, or a king. The open country was overspread with hords of shepherds and robbers of Tartar or Turkman origin; the recent conquests of Bajazet were restored to the emirs, one of whom, in base revenge, demolished his sepulchre; and his five sons were eager, by civil discord, to consume the remnant of their patrimony. I shall enumerate their names in the order of their age and actions ⁷². 1. It is doubtful, whether I relate the story of the true *Mustapha*, or of an impostor, who personated that lost prince. He fought by

Civil wars of
the sons of
Bajazet,
A. D.
1403—1421,

1. *Mustapha*;

his father's side in the battle of Angora : but when the captive sultan was permitted to enquire for his children, Moufa alone could be found ; and the Turkish historians , the slaves of the triumphant faction, are persuaded that his brother was confounded among the slain. If Mustapha escaped from that disastrous field, he was concealed twelve years from his friends and enemies ; till he emerged in Thessaly, and was hailed by a numerous party, as the son and successor of Bajazet. His first defeat would have been his last, had not the true, or false, Mustapha been saved by the Greeks, and restored, after the decease of his brother Mahomet, to liberty and empire. A degenerate mind seemed to argue his spurious birth ; and if, on the throne of Adrianople, he was adored as the Ottoman sultan ; his flight, his fetters, and an ignominious gibbet, delivered the impostor to popular contempt. A similar character and claim was asserted by several rival pretenders ; thirty persons are said to have suffered under the name of Mustapha ; and these frequent executions may perhaps insinuate, that the Turkish court was not perfectly secure of the death of the lawful prince. 2. After his father's captivity, Isa⁷³ reigned for some time in the neighbourhood of Angora, Sinope, and the Black Sea ; and his ambassadors were dismissed from the presence of Timour with fair promises and honourable gifts. But their master was soon deprived of his province and life, by a jealous brother, the sovereign of Amasia ; and the final

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2. Isa ;

event suggested a pious allusion, that the law of Moses and Jesus, of *Isa* and *Moufa*, had been abrogated by the greater *Mahomet*. 3. *Soliman* is not numbered in the list of the Turkish emperors: yet he checked the victorious progress of the Moguls; and after their departure, united for a while the thrones of Adrianople and Bursa. In war he was brave, active, and fortunate: his courage was softened by clemency; but it was likewise inflamed by presumption, and corrupted by intemperance and idleness. He relaxed the nerves of discipline, in a government where either the subject or the sovereign must continually tremble: his vices alienated the chiefs of the army and the law; and his daily drunkenness, so contemptible in a prince and a man, was doubly odious in a disciple of the prophet. In the slumber of intoxication, he was surprised by his brother *Moufa*; and as he fled from Adrianople towards the Byzantine capital, *Soliman* was overtaken and slain in a bath, after a reign of seven years and ten months. 4. The investiture of *Moufa* degraded him as the slave of the Moguls: his tributary kingdom of Anatolia was confined within a narrow limit, nor could his broken militia and empty treasury contend with the hardy and veteran bands of the sovereign of Romania. *Moufa* fled in disguise from the palace of Bursa, traversed the Propontis in an open boat; wandered over the Walachian and Servian hills; and after some vain attempts, ascended the throne of Adrianople, so recently stained

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3, *Soliman*,

A. D.

1403—1410.

4, *Moufa*,

A. D. 1410.

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5, Maho-
met I.
A. D.
1413—1421

with the blood of Soliman. In a reign of three years and an half, his troops were victorious against the Christians of Hungary and the Morea; but Moufa was ruined by his timorous disposition and unseasonable clemency. After resigning the sovereignty of Anatolia, he fell a victim to the perfidy of his ministers, and the superior ascendant of his brother Mahomet. 5. The final victory of Mahomet was the just recompence of his prudence and moderation. Before his father's captivity, the royal youth had been entrusted with the government of Amasia, thirty days journey from Constantinople, and the Turkish frontier against the Christians of Trebizond and Georgia. The castle, in Asiatic warfare, was esteemed impregnable; and the city of Amasia⁷⁴, which is equally divided by the river Iris, rises on either side in the form of an amphitheatre, and represents on a smaller scale the image of Bagdad. In his rapid career, Timour appears to have overlooked this obscure and contumacious angle of Anatolia; and Mahomet, without provoking the conqueror, maintained his silent independence, and chased from the province the last stragglers of the Tartar host. He relieved himself from the dangerous neighbourhood of Isa; but in the contests of their more powerful brethren, his firm neutrality was respected; till, after the triumph of Moufa, he stood forth the heir and avenger of the unfortunate Soliman. Mahomet obtained Anatolia by treaty and Romania by arms; and the foldier who presented

him with the head of Moufa was rewarded as the benefactor of his king and country. The eight years of his sole and peaceful reign were usefully employed in banishing the vices of civil discord, and restoring on a firmer basis the fabric of the Ottoman monarchy. His last care was the choice of two vizirs, Bajazet and Ibrahim⁷⁵, who might guide the youth of his son Amurath; and such was their union and prudence, that they concealed above forty days the emperor's death, till the arrival of his successor in the palace of Bursa. A new war was kindled in Europe by the prince, or impostor, Mustapha; the first vizir lost his army and his head; but the more fortunate Ibrahim, whose name and family are still revered, extinguished the last pretender to the throne of Bajazet, and closed the scene of domestic hostility.

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Reign of
Amurath II.
A. D.
1421—1451,
February 9.

In these conflicts, the wisest Turks, and indeed the body of the nation, were strongly attached to the unity of the empire; and Romania and Anatolia, so often torn asunder by private ambition, were animated by a strong and invincible tendency of cohesion. Their efforts might have instructed the Christian powers; and had they occupied with a confederate fleet, the streights of Gallipoli, the Ottomans, at least in Europe, must have been speedily annihilated. But the schism of the West, and the factions and wars of France and England, diverted the Latins from this generous enterprise: they enjoyed the present respite, without a thought of futurity; and were

Reunion of
the Ottoman
empire,
A. D. 1421:

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often tempted by a momentary interest, to serve the common enemy of their religion. A colony of Genoese⁷⁶, which had been planted at Phocæa⁷⁷ on the Ionian coast, was enriched by the lucrative monopoly of alum⁷⁸; and their tranquillity, under the Turkish empire, was secured by the annual payment of tribute. In the last civil war of the Ottomans, the Genoese governor, Adorno, a bold and ambitious youth, embraced the party of Amurath; and undertook with seven stout galleys to transport him from Asia to Europe. The sultan and five hundred guards embarked on board the admiral's ship; which was manned by eight hundred of the bravest Franks. His life and liberty were in their hands; nor can we, without reluctance, applaud the fidelity of Adorno, who, in the midst of the passage, knelt before him, and gratefully accepted a discharge of his arrears of tribute. They landed in sight of Mustapha and Gallipoli; two thousand Italians, armed with lances and battle-axes, attended Amurath to the conquest of Adrianople; and this venal service was soon repaid by the ruin of the commerce and colony of Phocæa.

State of the
Greek em-
pire,

A. D.

1402.—1425.

If Timour had generously marched at the request, and to the relief, of the Greek emperor, he might be entitled to the praise and gratitude of the Christians⁷⁹. But a Musulman, who carried into Georgia the sword of persecution, and respected the holy warfare of Bajazet, was not disposed to pity or succour the idolaters of Europe. The Tartar followed the impulse of

ambition; and the deliverance of Constantinople was the accidental consequence. When Manuel abdicated the government, it was his prayer, rather than his hope, that the ruin of the church and state might be delayed beyond his unhappy days; and after his return from a western pilgrimage, he expected every hour the news of the sad catastrophe. On a sudden he was astonished and rejoiced by the intelligence of the retreat, the overthrow, and the captivity of the Ottoman. Manuel⁸⁰ immediately sailed from Modon in the Morea; ascended the throne of Constantinople; and dismissed his blind competitor to an easy exile in the isle of Lesbos. The ambassadors of the son of Bajazet were soon introduced to his presence; but their pride was fallen, their tone was modest; they were awed by the just apprehension, lest the Greeks should open to the Moguls the gates of Europe. Soliman saluted the emperor by the name of father; solicited at his hands the government or gift of Romania; and promised to deserve his favour by inviolable friendship, and the restitution of Thessalonica, with the most important places along the Strymon, the Propontis, and the Black Sea. The alliance of Soliman exposed the emperor to the enmity and revenge of Moufa: the Turks appeared in arms before the gates of Constantinople; but they were repulsed by sea and land; and unless the city was guarded by some foreign mercenaries, the Greeks must have wondered at their own triumph. But, instead of prolonging

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the division of the Ottoman powers, the policy or passion of Manuel was tempted to assist the most formidable of the sons of Bajazet. He concluded a treaty with Mahomet, whose progress was checked by the insuperable barrier of Gallipoli: the sultan and his troops were transported over the Bosphorus; he was hospitably entertained in the capital; and his successful sally was the first step to the conquest of Romania. The ruin was suspended by the prudence and moderation of the conqueror: he faithfully discharged his own obligations and those of Soliman, respected the laws of gratitude and peace; and left the emperor guardian of his two younger sons, in the vain hope of saving them from the jealous cruelty of their brother Amurath. But the execution of his last testament would have offended the national honour and religion: and the divan unanimously pronounced, that the royal youths should never be abandoned to the custody and education of a Christian dog. On this refusal, the Byzantine councils were divided: but the age and caution of Manuel yielded to the presumption of his son John; and they unsheathed a dangerous weapon of revenge, by dismissing the true or false Mustapha, who had long been detained as a captive and hostage, and for whose maintenance they received an annual pension of three hundred thousand aspers⁸¹. At the door of his prison, Mustapha subscribed to every proposal; and the keys of Gallipoli, or rather of Europe, were stipulated as the price of his

deliverance. But no sooner was he seated on the throne of Romania, than he dismissed the Greek ambassadors with a smile of contempt, declaring, in a pious tone, that, at the day of judgment, he would rather answer for the violation of an oath, than for the surrender of a Musulman city into the hands of the infidels. The emperor was at once the enemy of the two rivals; from whom he had sustained, and to whom he had offered, an injury; and the victory of Amurath was followed, in the ensuing spring, by the siege of Constantinople ⁸².

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The religious merit of subduing the city of the Cæsars, attracted from Asia a crowd of volunteers, who aspired to the crown of martyrdom: their military ardour was inflamed by the promise of rich spoils and beautiful females; and the sultan's ambition was consecrated by the presence and prediction of Seid Bechar, a descendant of the prophet ⁸³, who arrived in the camp, on a mule, with a venerable train of five hundred disciples. But he might blush, if a fanatic could blush, at the failure of his assurances. The strength of the walls resisted an army of two hundred thousand Turks: their assaults were repelled by the sallies of the Greeks and their foreign mercenaries; the old resources of defence were opposed to the new engines of attack; and the enthusiasm of the dervish, who was snatched to heaven in visionary converse with Mahomet, was answered by the credulity of the Christians, who *beheld* the Virgin Mary, in a violet garment, walking on the rampart

Siege of
Constanti-
nople by
Amurath II.
A. D. 1422,
June 10 —
August 24.

C H A P. LXV. and animating their courage⁴⁴. After a siege of two months, Amurath was recalled to Burfa by a domestic revolt, which had been kindled by Greek treachery, and was soon extinguished by the death of a guiltless brother. While he led his Janizaries to new conquests in Europe and Asia, the Byzantine empire was indulged in a servile and precarious respite of thirty years. Manuel sunk into the grave; and John Palæologus was permitted to reign, for an annual tribute of three hundred thousand aspers, and the dereliction of almost all that he held beyond the suburbs of Constantinople.

The emperor
John Palæo-
logus II.

A. D. 1425,

July 21—

A. D. 1448,

October 31.

Hereditary
succession and
merit of the
Ottomans.

In the establishment and restoration of the Turkish empire, the first merit must doubtless be assigned to the personal qualities of the sultans; since, in human life, the most important scenes will depend on the character of a single actor. By some shades of wisdom and virtue, they may be discriminated from each other; but, except in a single instance, a period of nine reigns, and two hundred and sixty-five years, is occupied, from the elevation of Othman to the death of Soliman, by a rare series of warlike and active princes, who impressed their subjects with obedience and their enemies with terror. Instead of the slothful luxury of the seraglio, the heirs of royalty were educated in the council and the field: from early youth they were entrusted by their fathers with the command of provinces and armies; and this manly institution, which was often productive of civil war, must have essentially

contributed to the discipline and vigour of the monarchy. The Ottomans cannot style themselves, like the Arabian caliphs, the descendants or successors of the apostle of God; and the kindred which they claim with the Tartar khans of the house of Zingis, appears to be founded in flattery rather than in truth⁸⁵. Their origin is obscure; but their sacred and indefeasible right, which no time can erase and no violence can infringe, was soon and unalterably implanted in the minds of their subjects. A weak or vicious sultan may be deposed and strangled; but his inheritance devolves to an infant or an idiot: nor has the most daring rebel presumed to ascend the throne of his lawful sovereign⁸⁶. While the transient dynasties of Asia have been continually subverted by a crafty vizir in the palace or a victorious general in the camp, the Ottoman succession has been confirmed by the practice of five centuries, and is now incorporated with the vital principle of the Turkish nation.

To the spirit and constitution of that nation, a strong and singular influence may however be ascribed. The primitive subjects of Othman were the four hundred families of wandering Turkmen, who had followed his ancestors from the Oxus to the Sangar; and the plains of Anatolia are still covered with the white and black tents of their rustic brethren. But this original drop was dissolved in the mass of voluntary and vanquished subjects, who, under the name of Turks, are united by the common ties of religion, language,

Education
and disci-
pline of the
Turks.

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and manners. In the cities, from Erzeroum to Belgrade, that national appellation is common to all the Moslems, the first and most honourable inhabitants; but they have abandoned, at least in Romania, the villages, and the cultivation of the land, to the Christian peasants. In the vigorous age of the Ottoman government, the Turks were themselves excluded from all civil and military honours; and a fervile class, an artificial people, was raised by the discipline of education to obey, to conquer, and to command³⁷. From the time of Orchan and the first Amurath, the sultans were persuaded that a government of the sword must be renewed in each generation with new soldiers; and that such soldiers must be fought, not in effeminate Asia, but among the hardy and warlike natives of Europe. The provinces of Thrace, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Servia, became the perpetual seminary of the Turkish army; and when the royal fifth of the captives was diminished by conquest, an inhuman tax, of the fifth child, or of every fifth year, was rigorously levied on the Christian families. At the age of twelve or fourteen years, the most robust youths were torn from their parents; their names were enrolled in a book; and from that moment they were clothed, taught, and maintained, for the public service. According to the promise of their appearance, they were selected for the royal schools of Bursa, Pera, and Adrianople, entrusted to the care of the bashaws, or dispersed in the houses of the Anatolian

peasantry. It was the first care of their masters to instruct them in the Turkish language : their bodies were exercised by every labour that could fortify their strength ; they learned to wrestle, to leap, to run, to shoot with the bow, and afterwards with the musket ; till they were drafted into the chambers and companies of the Janizaries, and severely trained in the military or monastic discipline of the order. The youths most conspicuous for birth, talents, and beauty, were admitted into the inferior class of *Agiamoglans*, or the more liberal rank of *Ichoglans*, of whom the former were attached to the palace, and the latter to the person of the prince. In four successive schools, under the rod of the white eunuchs, the arts of horsemanship and of darting the javelin were their daily exercise, while those of a more studious cast applied themselves to the study of the Koran, and the knowledge of the Arabic and Persian tongues. As they advanced in seniority and merit, they were gradually dismissed to military, civil, and even ecclesiastical employments : the longer their stay, the higher was their expectation ; till, at a mature period, they were admitted into the number of the forty agas, who stood before the sultan, and were promoted by his choice to the government of provinces and the first honours of the empire^{ss}. Such a mode of institution was admirably adapted to the form and spirit of a despotic monarchy. The ministers and generals were, in the strictest sense, the slaves of the emperor, to whose bounty

CHAP. LXV. they were indebted for their instruction and support. When they left the *seraglio*, and suffered their beards to grow as the symbol of enfranchisement, they found themselves in an important office, without faction or friendship, without parents and without heirs, dependent on the hand which had raised them from the dust, and which, on the slightest displeasure, could break in pieces these statues of glass, as they are aptly termed by the Turkish proverb⁸⁹. In the slow and painful steps of education, their characters and talents were unfolded to a discerning eye: the *man*, naked and alone, was reduced to the standard of his personal merit; and, if the sovereign had wisdom to chuse, he possessed a pure and boundless liberty of choice. The Ottoman candidates were trained by the virtues of abstinence to those of action; by the habits of submission to those of command. A similar spirit was diffused among the troops; and their silence and sobriety, their patience and modesty, have extorted the reluctant praise of their Christian enemies⁹⁰. Nor can the victory appear doubtful, if we compare the discipline and exercise of the Janizaries with the pride of birth, the independence of chivalry, the ignorance of the new levies, the mutinous temper of the veterans, and the vices of intemperance and disorder, which so long contaminated the armies of Europe.

Invention
and use of
gunpowder.

The only hope of salvation for the Greek empire and the adjacent kingdoms, would have been some more powerful weapon, some discovery in

the art of war, that should give them a decisive superiority over their Turkish foes. Such a weapon was in their hands; such a discovery had been made in the critical moment of their fate. The chymists of China or Europe had found, by casual or elaborate experiments, that a mixture of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal, produces, with a spark of fire, a tremendous explosion. It was soon observed, that if the expansive force were compressed in a strong tube, a ball of stone or iron might be expelled with irresistible and destructive velocity. The precise æra of the invention and application of gun-powder⁹¹ is involved in doubtful traditions and equivocal language; yet we may clearly discern, that it was known before the middle of the fourteenth century; and that before the end of the same, the use of artillery in battles and sieges, by sea and land, was familiar to the states of Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and England⁹². The priority of nations is of small account; none could derive any exclusive benefit from their previous or superior knowledge; and in the common improvement they stood on the same level of relative power and military science. Nor was it possible to circumscribe the secret within the pale of the church; it was disclosed to the Turks by the treachery of apostates and the selfish policy of rivals; and the sultans had sense to adopt, and wealth to reward, the talents of a Christian engineer. The Genoese, who transported Amurath into Europe, must be accused

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as his preceptors; and it was probably by their hands that his cannon was cast and directed at the siege of Constantinople⁹³. The first attempt was indeed unsuccessful; but in the general warfare of the age, the advantage was on *their* side, who were most commonly the assailants; for a while the proportion of the attack and defence was suspended; and this thundering artillery was pointed against the walls and towers which had been erected only to resist the less potent engines of antiquity. By the Venetians, the use of gunpowder was communicated without reproach to the sultans of Egypt and Persia, their allies against the Ottoman power; the secret was soon propagated to the extremities of Asia; and the advantage of the European was confined to his easy victories over the savages of the new world. If we contrast the rapid progress of this mischievous discovery with the slow and laborious advances of reason, science, and the arts of peace, a philosopher, according to his temper, will laugh or weep at the folly of mankind.

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Applications of the Eastern Emperors to the Popes: — Visits to the West, of John the First, Manuel, and John the Second, Palaeologus. — Union of the Greek and Latin Churches, promoted by the Council of Basil, and concluded at Ferrara and Florence. — State of Literature at Constantinople. — Its Revival in Italy by the Greek Fugitives. — Curiosity and Emulation of the Latins.

IN the four last centuries of the Greek emperors, their friendly or hostile aspect towards the pope and the Latins, may be observed as the thermometer of their prosperity or distress; as the scale of the rise and fall of the Barbarian dynasties. When the Turks of the house of Seljuk pervaded Asia and threatened Constantinople, we have seen at the council of Placentia, the suppliant ambassadors of Alexius, imploring the protection of the common father of the Christians. No sooner had the arms of the French pilgrims removed the sultan from Nice to Iconium, than the Greek princes resumed, or avowed, their genuine hatred and contempt for the schismatics of the West, which precipitated the first downfall of their empire. The date of the Mogul invasion is marked in the soft and charitable language of

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Embassy of
the younger
Andronicus
to pope Be-
nedict XII.
A. D. 1339.

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John Vataces. After the recovery of Constantinople, the throne of the first Palæologus was encompassed by foreign and domestic enemies: as long as the sword of Charles was suspended over his head, he basely courted the favour of the Roman pontiff; and sacrificed to the present danger, his faith, his virtue, and the affection of his subjects. On the decease of Michael, the prince and people asserted the independence of their church and the purity of their creed: the elder Andronicus neither feared nor loved the Latins; in his last distress, pride was the safeguard of superstition, nor could he decently retract in his age the firm and orthodox declarations of his youth. His grandson, the younger Andronicus, was left a slave in his temper and situation; and the conquest of Bithynia by the Turks, admonished him to seek a temporal and spiritual alliance with the western princes. After a separation and silence of fifty years, a secret agent, the monk Barlaam, was dispatched to pope Benedict the twelfth; and his artful instructions appear to have been drawn by the master-hand of the great domestic. "Most holy father," was he commissioned to say, "the emperor is not less
" desirous than yourself of an union between the
" two churches: but in this delicate transaction,
" he is obliged to respect his own dignity and
" the prejudices of his subjects. The ways of
" union are two-fold; force, and persuasion. Of
" force, the inefficacy has been already tried;
" since the Latins have subdued the empire,

The argu-
ments for a
crusade and
union.

“ without subduing the minds, of the Greeks.
 “ The method of persuasion, though slow, is
 “ sure and permanent. A deputation of thirty or
 “ forty of our doctors would probably agree
 “ with those of the Vatican, in the love of truth
 “ and the unity of belief: but on their return,
 “ what would be the use, the recompence of such
 “ agreement? the scorn of their brethren, and
 “ the reproaches of a blind and obstinate nation.
 “ Yet that nation is accustomed to reverence the
 “ general councils, which have fixed the articles
 “ of our faith; and if they reprobate the decrees
 “ of Lyons, it is because the Eastern churches
 “ were neither heard nor represented in that ar-
 “ bitrary meeting. For this salutary end, it will
 “ be expedient, and even necessary, that a well-
 “ chosen legate should be sent into Greece, to
 “ convene the patriarchs of Constantinople Alex-
 “ andria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; and, with
 “ their aid, to prepare a free and universal synod.
 “ But at this moment,” continued the subtle
 agent “ the empire is assaulted and endangered by
 “ the Turks, who have occupied four of the
 “ greatest cities of Anatolia. The Christian in-
 “ habitants have expressed a wish of returning to
 “ their allegiance and religion; but the forces and
 “ revenues of the emperor are insufficient for their
 “ deliverance: and the Roman legate must be ac-
 “ companied or preceded, by an army of Franks,
 “ to expel the infidels, and open a way to the
 “ holy sepulchre.” If the suspicious Latins should
 require some pledge, some previous effect of the

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sincerity of the Greeks, the answers of Barlaam were perspicuous and rational. " 1. A general synod can alone consummate the union of the churches; nor can such a synod be held till the three Oriental patriarchs, and a great number of bishops, are enfranchised from the Mahometan yoke. 2. The Greeks are alienated by a long series of oppression and injury: they must be reconciled by some act of brotherly love, some effectual succour, which may fortify the authority and arguments, of the emperor, and the friends of the union. 3. If some difference of faith or ceremonies should be found incurable, the Greeks however are the disciples of Christ; and the Turks are the common enemies of the Christian name. The Armenians, Cyprians, and Rhodians, are equally attacked; and it will become the piety of the French princes to draw their swords in the general defence of religion. 4. Should the subjects of Andronicus be treated as the worst of schismatics, of heretics, of pagans, a judicious policy may yet instruct the powers of the West to embrace an useful ally, to uphold a sinking empire, to guard the confines of Europe; and rather to join the Greeks against the Turks, than to expect the union of the Turkish arms with the troops and treasures of captive Greece." The reasons, the offers, and the demands, of Andronicus, were eluded with cold and stately indifference. The Kings of France and Naples declined the dangers and

glory of a crusade; the pope refused to call a new synod to determine old articles of faith: and his regard for the obsolete claims of the Latin emperor and clergy, engaged him to use an offensive superscription: "To the *moderator*² of the Greeks, and the persons who style themselves the patriarchs of the Eastern churches." For such an embassy, a time and character less propitious could not easily have been found. Benedict the twelfth³ was a dull peasant, perplexed with scruples, and immersed in sloth and wine: his pride might enrich with a third crown the papal tiara, but he was alike unfit for the regal and the pastoral office.

After the decease of Andronicus, while the Greeks were distracted by intestine war, they could not presume to agitate a general union of the Christians. But as soon as Cantacuzene had subdued and pardoned his enemies, he was anxious to justify, or at least to extenuate, the introduction of the Turks into Europe, and the nuptials of his daughter with a Musulman prince. Two officers of state, with a Latin interpreter, were sent in his name to the Roman court, which was transplanted to Avignon, on the banks of the Rhône, during a period of seventy years; they represented the hard necessity which had urged him to embrace the alliance of the miscreants, and pronounced by his command the specious and edifying sounds of union and crusade. Pope Clement the sixth⁴, the successor of Benedict, received them with hospitality and

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Negotiation
of Cantacu-
zene with
Clement VI.
A. D. 1348.

C H A P. LXVI. honour, acknowledged the innocence of their sovereign, excused his distress, applauded his magnanimity, and displayed a clear knowledge of the state and revolutions of the Greek empire, which he had imbibed from the honest accounts of a Savoyard lady, an attendant of the empress Anne^s. If Clement was ill-endowed with the virtues of a priest, he possessed however the spirit and magnificence of a prince, whose liberal hand distributed benefices and kingdoms with equal facility. Under his reign, Avignon was the seat of pomp and pleasure: in his youth he had surpassed the licentiousness of a baron; and the palace, nay, the bed-chamber of the pope, was adorned, or polluted, by the visits of his female favourites. The wars of France and England were adverse to the holy enterprise; but his vanity was amused by the splendid idea; and the Greek ambassadors returned with two Latin bishops, the ministers of the pontiff. On their arrival at Constantinople, the emperor and the nuncios admired each other's piety and eloquence: and their frequent conferences were filled with mutual praises and promises, by which both parties were amused, and neither could be deceived. "I am delighted," said the devout Cantacuzene, "with the project of our holy
 " war, which must redound to my personal
 " glory, as well as to the public benefit of
 " Christendom. My dominions will give a free
 " passage to the armies of France: my troops,
 " my gallies, my treasures, shall be consecrated

“ to the common cause; and happy would be
 “ my fate, could I deserve and obtain the crown
 “ of martyrdom. Words are insufficient to express
 “ the ardour with which I fight for the reunion
 “ of the scattered members of Christ. If my
 “ death could avail, I would gladly present my
 “ sword and my neck: if the spiritual phoenix
 “ could arise from my ashes, I would erect the
 “ pile and kindle the flame with my own hands.”

Yet the Greek emperor presumed to observe,
 that the articles of faith which divided the two
 churches had been introduced by the pride and
 precipitation of the Latins: he disclaimed the
 servile and arbitrary steps of the first Palæologus;
 and firmly declared, that he would never submit
 his conscience unless to the decrees of a free and
 universal synod. “ The situation of the times,”
 continued he, “ will not allow the pope and
 “ myself to meet either at Rome or Constanti-
 “ nople; but some maritime city may be chosen
 “ on the verge of the two empires, to unite the
 “ bishops, and to instruct the faithful, of the
 “ East and West.” The nuncios seemed content
 with the proposition; and Cantacuzene affects to
 deplore the failure of his hopes, which were soon
 overthrown by the death of Clement and the
 different temper of his successor. His own life
 was prolonged, but it was prolonged in a cloister;
 and, except by his prayers, the humble monk
 was incapable of directing the counsels of his
 pupil or the state.

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Treaty of
John Palæo-
logus I. with
Innocent VI.
A. D. 1355.

Yet of all the Byzantine princes, that pupil, John Palæologus, was the best disposed to embrace, to believe, and to obey, the shepherd of the West. His mother, Anne of Savoy, was baptized in the bosom of the Latin church: her marriage with Andronicus imposed a change of name, of apparel, and of worship; but her heart was still faithful to her country and religion; she had formed the infancy of her son, and she governed the emperor, after his mind, or at least his stature, was enlarged to the size of man. In the first year of his deliverance and restoration, the Turks were still masters of the Hellespont; the son of Cantacuzene was in arms at Adrianople; and Palæologus could depend neither on himself nor on his people. By his mother's advice, and in the hope of foreign aid, he abjured the rights both of the church and state; and the act of slavery², subscribed in purple ink, and sealed with the *golden bull*, was privately intrusted to an Italian agent. The first article of the treaty is an oath of fidelity and obedience to Innocent the sixth and his successors, the supreme pontiffs of the Roman and Catholic church. The emperor promises to entertain with due reverence their legates and nuncios; to assign a palace for their residence and a temple for their worship; and to deliver his second son Manuel as the hostage of his faith. For these concessions, he requires a prompt succour of fifteen gallies, with five hundred men at arms, and a thousand archers, to serve against his Christian

and Musulman enemies. Palæologus engages to impose on his clergy and people the same spiritual yoke; but as the resistance of the Greeks might be justly foreseen, he adopts the two effectual methods of corruption and education. The legate was empowered to distribute the vacant benefices among the ecclesiastics who should subscribe the creed of the Vatican: three schools were instituted to instruct the youth of Constantinople in the language and doctrine of the Latins; and the name of Andronicus, the heir of the empire, was enrolled as the first student. Should he fail in the measures of persuasion or force, Palæologus declares himself unworthy to reign; transferred to the pope all regal and paternal authority; and invests Innocent with full power to regulate the family, the government, and the marriage, of his son and successor. But this treaty was neither executed nor published: the Roman gallies were as vain and imaginary as the submission of the Greeks; and it was only by the secrecy, that their sovereign escaped the dishonour, of this fruitless humiliation.

The tempest of the Turkish arms soon burst on his head; and, after the loss of Adrianople and Romania, he was enclosed in his capital, the vassal of the haughty Amurath, with the miserable hope of being the last devoured by the savage. In this abject state, Palæologus embraced the resolution of embarking for Venice, and casting himself at the feet of the pope, he was the first of the Byzantine princes who had ever

Visit of John
Palæologus
to Urban V.
at Rome,
A. D. 1369,
October 13,
etc.

CHAP. visited the unknown regions of the West, yet in
 LXVI. them alone he could seek consolation or relief;
 and with less violation of his dignity he might
 appear in the sacred college than at the Ottoman
Porte. After a long absence, the Roman pontiffs
 were returning from Avignon to the banks of the
 Tyber; Urban the fifth^s, of a mild and virtuous
 character, encouraged or allowed the pilgrimage
 of the Greek prince; and, within the same year,
 enjoyed the glory of receiving in the Vatican
 the two Imperial shadows, who represented the
 majesty of Constantine and Charlemagne. In this
 suppliant visit, the emperor of Constantinople,
 whose vanity was lost in his distress, gave more
 than could be expected of empty sounds and
 formal submissions. A previous trial was imposed;
 and in the presence of four cardinals, he acknow-
 ledged, as a true Catholic, the supremacy of the
 pope, and the double procession of the Holy
 Ghost. After this purification, he was introduced
 to a public audience in the church of St. Peter;
 Urban, in the midst of the cardinals, was seated
 on his throne; the Greek monarch, after three
 genuflexions, devoutly kissed the feet, the hands,
 and at length the mouth, of the holy father, who
 celebrated high mass in his presence, allowed him
 to lead the bridle of his mule, and treated him
 with a sumptuous banquet in the Vatican. The
 entertainment of Palæologus^s was friendly and
 honourable; yet some difference was observed
 between the emperors of the East and West^s;
 nor could the former be entitled to the rare

privilege of chaunting the gospel in the rank of a deacon¹⁰. In favour of his profelyte, Urban strove to rekindle the zeal of the French king, and the other powers of the West; but he found them cold in the general cause, and active only in their domestic quarrels. The last hope of the emperor was in an English mercenary, John Hawkwood¹¹, or Acuto, who with a band of adventurers, the white brotherhood, had ravaged Italy from the Alps to Calabria; sold his services to the hostile states; and incurred a just excommunication by shooting his arrows against the papal residence. A special licence was granted to negociate with the outlaw, but the forces, or the spirit, of Hawkwood were unequal to the enterprize; and it was for the advantage perhaps of Palæologus to be disappointed of a succour, that must have been costly, that could not be effectual, and which might have been dangerous¹². The disconsolate Greek¹³ prepared for his return, but even his return was impeded by a most ignominious obstacle. On his arrival at Venice, he had borrowed large sums at exorbitant usury; but his coffers were empty, his creditors were impatient, and his person was detained as the best security for the payment. His eldest son Andronicus, the regent of Constantinople, was repeatedly urged to exhaust every resource; and, even by stripping the churches, to extricate his father from captivity and disgrace. But the unnatural youth was insensible of the disgrace, and secretly pleased with the captivity of the emperor;

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C H A P. the state was poor, the clergy was obstinate;
 LXVI. nor could some religious scruple be wanting to
 excuse the guilt of his indifference and delay.
 Such undutiful neglect was severely reprov'd by
 the piety of his brother Manuel, who instantly
 sold or mortgaged all that he possessed, embarked
 for Venice, relieved his father, and pledged his

His return to
 Constanti-
 nople,
 A. D. 1370.

own freedom to be responsible for the debt. On
 his return to Constantinople, the parent and king
 distinguished his two sons with suitable rewards;
 but the faith and manners of the slothful Palæo-
 logus had not been improved by his Roman pil-
 grimage; and his apostacy or conversion, devoid
 of any spiritual or temporal effects, was speedily
 forgotten by the Greeks and Latins ¹⁴.

Visit of the
 emperor Ma-
 nuel

Thirty years after the return of Palæologus,
 his son and successor, Manuel, from a similar
 motive, but on a larger scale, again visited the
 countries of the West. In a preceding chapter I
 have related his treaty with Bajazet, the violation
 of that treaty, the siege or blockade of Constan-
 tinople, and the French succour under the com-
 mand of the gallant Boucicault ¹⁵. By his ambaf-
 sadors, Manuel had solicited the Latin powers;
 but it was thought that the presence of a distres-
 sed monarch would draw tears and supplies from
 the hardest Barbarians ¹⁶; and the marshal who
 advised the journey, prepared the reception, of
 the Byzantine prince. The land was occupied
 by the Turks; but the navigation of Venice was
 safe and open: Italy received him as the first, or,
 at least, as the second of the Christian princes;

Manuel was pitied as the champion and confessor of the faith; and the dignity of his behaviour prevented that pity from sinking into contempt. From Venice he proceeded to Padua and Pavia; and even the duke of Milan, a secret ally of Bajazet, gave him safe and honourable conduct to the verge of his dominions¹⁷. On the confines of France¹⁸, the royal officers undertook the care of his person, journey, and expences; and two thousand of the richest citizens, in arms and on horseback, came forth to meet him as far as Charenton, in the neighbourhood of the capital. At the gates of Paris, he was saluted by the chancellor and the parliament; and Charles the sixth, attended by his princes and nobles, welcomed his brother with a cordial embrace. The successor of Constantine was clothed in a robe of white silk, and mounted on a milk-white steed; a circumstance, in the French ceremonial, of singular importance: the white colour is considered as the symbol of sovereignty; and, in a late visit, the German emperor, after an haughty demand and a peevish refusal, had been reduced to content himself with a black courser. Manuel was lodged in the Louvre; a succession of feasts and balls, the pleasures of the banquet and the chase, were ingeniously varied by the politeness of the French, to display their magnificence and amuse his grief: he was indulged in the liberty of his chapel; and the doctors of the Sorbonne were astonished, and possibly scandalized, by the language, the rites, and the vestments, of his Greek

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to the court
of France,
A. D. 1400,
June 3;

C H A P. LXVI. clergy. But the slightest glance on the state of the kingdom, must teach him to despair of any effectual assistance. The unfortunate Charles, though he enjoyed some lucid intervals, continually relapsed into furious or stupid insanity: the reins of government were alternately seized by his brother and uncle, the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy, whose factious competition prepared the miseries of civil war. The former was a gay youth, dissolved in luxury and love: the latter was the father of John count of Nevers, who had so lately been ransomed from Turkish captivity; and, if the fearless son was ardent to revenge his defeat, the more prudent Burgundy was content with the cost and peril of the first experiment. When Manuel had satiated the curiosity, and perhaps fatigued the patience, of the French, he resolved on a visit to the adjacent island. In his progress from Dover, he was entertained at Canterbury with due reverence by the prior and monks of St. Austin; and, on Blackheath, king Henry the fourth, with the English court, saluted the Greek hero (I copy our old historian), who, during many days, was lodged and treated in London as emperor of the East¹⁹. But the state of England was still more adverse to the design of the holy war. In the same year, the hereditary sovereign had been deposed and murdered; the reigning prince was a successful usurper, whose ambition was punished by jealousy and remorse: nor could Henry of Lancaster withdraw his person or forces from the

of England,
A. D. 1400,
December.

defence of a throne incessantly shaken by conspiracy and rebellion. He pitied, he praised, he feasted, the emperor of Constantinople; but if the English monarch assumed the cross, it was only to appease his people, and perhaps his conscience, by the merit or semblance of his pious intention²⁰. Satisfied, however, with gifts and honours, Manuel returned to Paris; and, after a residence of two years in the West, shaped his course through Germany and Italy, embarked at Venice, and patiently expected, in the Morea, the moment of his ruin or deliverance. Yet he had escaped the ignominious necessity of offering his religion to public or private sale. The Latin church was distracted by the great schism: the kings, the nations, the universities, of Europe, were divided in their obedience between the popes of Rome and Avignon; and the emperor, anxious to conciliate the friendship of both parties, abstained from any correspondence with the indigent and unpopular rivals. His journey coincided with the year of the jubilee; but he passed through Italy without desiring, or deserving, the plenary indulgence which abolished the guilt or penance of the sins of the faithful. The Roman pope was offended by this neglect; accused him of irreverence to an image of Christ; and exhorted the princes of Italy to reject and abandon the obstinate schismatic²¹.

His return to
Greece,
A. D. 1402,

During the period of the crusades, the Greeks

Greek know-
ledge and de-
scriptions.

beheld with astonishment and terror the perpetual stream of emigration that flowed, and continued

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to flow, from the unknown climates of the West. The visits of their last emperors removed the veil of separation, and they disclosed to their eyes the powerful nations of Europe, whom they no longer presumed to brand with the name of Barbarians. The observations of Manuel, and his more inquisitive followers, have been preserved by a Byzantine historian of the times²²; his scattered ideas I shall collect and abridge; and it may be amusing enough, perhaps instructive, to contemplate the rude pictures of Germany, France, and England, whose ancient and modern state are so familiar to *our* minds. I. GERMANY (says the Greek Chalcondyles) is of ample latitude from Vienna to the Ocean; and it stretches (a strange geography) from Prague in Bohemia to the river Tartessus, and the Pyrenæan mountains²³. The soil, except in figs and olives, is sufficiently fruitful; the air is salubrious; the bodies of the natives are robust and healthy; and these cold regions are seldom visited with the calamities of pestilence, or earthquakes. After the Scythians or Tartars, the Germans are the most numerous of nations; they are brave and patient, and were they united under a single head, their force would be irresistible. By the gift of the pope, they have acquired the privilege of chusing the Roman emperor²⁴; nor is any people more devoutly attached to the faith and obedience of the Latin patriarch. The greatest part of the country is divided among the princes and prelates; but Strasburgh, Cologne, Hamburgh, and

and more than two hundred free cities, are governed by sage and equal laws, according to the will, and for the advantage, of the whole community. The use of duels, or single combats on foot, prevails among them in peace and war; their industry excels in all the mechanic arts; and the Germans may boast of the invention of gunpowder and cannon, which is now diffused over the greatest part of the world. II. The kingdom of FRANCE is spread above fifteen or twenty days journey from Germany to Spain, and from the Alps to the British Ocean; containing many flourishing cities, and among these Paris, the seat of the king, which surpasses the rest in riches and luxury. Many princes and lords alternately wait in his palace, and acknowledge him as their sovereign; the most powerful are the dukes of Bretagne and Burgundy, of whom the latter possesses the wealthy province of Flanders, whose harbours are frequented by the ships and merchants of our own and the more remote seas. The French are an ancient and opulent people: and their language and manners, though somewhat different, are not dissimilar from those of the Italians. Vain of the Imperial dignity of Charlemagne, of their victories over the Saracens, and of the exploits of their heroes, Oliver and Rowland²⁵, they esteem themselves the first of the western nations: but this foolish arrogance has been recently humbled by the unfortunate events of their wars against the English, the inhabitants of the British island.

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of France;

CHAP. III. BRITAIN, in the ocean, and opposite to the
 LXVI. shores of Flanders, may be considered either as
 of England. one, or as three islands; but the whole is united
 by a common interest, by the same manners,
 and by a similar government. The measure of
 its circumference is five thousand stadia: the land
 is overspread with towns and villages: though
 destitute of wine, and not abounding in fruit-
 trees, it is fertile in wheat and barley; in honey
 and wool; and much cloth is manufactured by
 the inhabitants. In populousness and power, in
 riches and luxury, London²⁶, the metropolis of
 the isle, may claim a pre-eminence over all the
 cities of the West. It is situate on the Thames,
 a broad and rapid river, which at the distance of
 thirty miles falls into the Gallic Sea; and the
 daily flow and ebb of the tide, affords a safe
 entrance and departure to the vessels of commerce.
 The king is the head of a powerful and turbulent
 aristocracy; his principal vassals hold their estates
 by a free and unalterable tenure; and the laws
 define the limits of his authority and their obe-
 dience. The kingdom has been often afflicted
 by foreign conquest and domestic sedition; but
 the natives are bold and hardy, renowned in
 arms and victorious in war. The form of their
 shields or targets is derived from the Italians,
 that of their swords from the Greeks; the use
 of the long bow is the peculiar and decisive
 advantage of the English. Their language bears
 no affinity to the idioms of the continent; in
 the habits of domestic life, they are not easily

distinguished from their neighbours of France : but the most singular circumstance of their manners is their disregard of conjugal honour and of female chastity. In their mutual visits, as the first act of hospitality, the guest is welcomed in the embraces of their wives and daughters : among friends they are lent and borrowed without shame ; nor are the islanders offended at this strange commerce, and its inevitable consequences ²⁷. Informed as we are of the customs of old England, and assured of the virtue of our mothers, we may smile at the credulity, or resent the injustice, of the Greek, who must have confounded a modest salute ²⁸ with a criminal embrace. But his credulity and injustice may teach an important lesson ; to distrust the accounts of foreign and remote nations, and to suspend our belief of every tale that deviates from the laws of nature and the character of man ²⁹.

After his return, and the victory of Timour, Manuel reigned many years in prosperity and peace. As long as the sons of Bajazet solicited his friendship and spared his dominions, he was satisfied with the national religion ; and his leisure was employed in composing twenty theological dialogues for its defence. The appearance of the Byzantine ambassadors at the council of Constance ³⁰ announces the restoration of the Turkish power, as well as of the Latin church ; the conquest of the sultans, Mahomet and Amurath, reconciled the emperor to the Vatican ; and the siege of Constantinople almost tempted him to acquiesce

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Indifference
of Manuel
towards the
Latins,

A. D.

1402—1417.

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His negocia-
tions,

A. D.
1417—1425.

His private
motives.

in the double proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt. When Martin the fifth aſcended without a rival the chair of St. Peter, a friendly intercourſe of letters and embaſſies was revived between the Eaſt and Weſt. Ambition on one ſide, and diſtreſs on the other, dictated the ſame decent language of charity and peace: the artful Greek expreſſed a deſire of marrying his fix ſons to Italian princeſſes; and the Roman, not leſs artful, diſpatched the daughter of the marquis of Montferrat, with a company of noble virgins, to ſoſten by their charms the obſtinacy of the ſchiſmatics. Yet under this mask of zeal, a diſcerning eye will perceive that all was hollow and inſincere in the court and church of Conſtantinople. According to the viciffitudes of danger and reſpite, the emperor advanced or retreated; alternately inſtructed and diſavowed his miniſters; and eſcaped from an importunate preſſure by urging the duty of enquiry, the obligation of collecting the ſenſe of his patriarchs and biſhops, and the impoſſibility of convening them at a time when the Turkiſh arms were at the gates of his capital. From a review of the public tranſactions it will appear, that the Greeks inſiſted on three ſucceſſive meaſures, a ſuccour, a council, and a final re-union, while the Latins eluded the ſecond, and only promiſed the firſt, as a conſequential and voluntary reward of the third. But we have an opportunity of unfolding the moſt ſecret intentions of Manuel, as he explained them in a private converſation without artifice or diſguiſe. In his declining age,

the emperor had associated John Palæologus, the second of the name, and the eldest of his sons, on whom he devolved the greatest part of the authority and weight of government. One day, in the presence only of the historian Phranza³¹, his favourite chamberlain, he opened to his colleague and successor the true principle of his negotiations with the pope³². "Our last resource," said Manuel, "against the Turks is their fear of
 " our union with the Latins, of the warlike
 " nations of the West, who may arm for our
 " relief and for their destruction. As often as
 " you are threatened by the miscreants, present
 " this danger before their eyes. Propose a council;
 " consult on the means; but ever delay and avoid
 " the convocation of an assembly, which cannot
 " tend either to our spiritual or temporal emolu-
 " ment. The Latins are proud; the Greeks
 " are obstinate; neither party will recede or
 " retract; and the attempt of a perfect union will
 " confirm the schism, alienate the churches,
 " and leave us, without hope or defence, at
 " the mercy of the Barbarians." Impatient of this salutary lesson, the royal youth arose from his seat, and departed in silence; and the wise monarch (continues Phranza), casting his eyes on me, thus resumed his discourse: "My son
 " deems himself a great and heroic prince; but,
 " alas! our miserable age does not afford scope
 " for heroism or greatness. His daring spirit
 " might have suited the happier times of our
 " ancestors; but the present state requires not an

C H A P. “ emperor, but a cautious steward of the last
 LXVI. “ relics of our fortunes. Well do I remember
 “ the lofty expectations which he built on our
 “ alliance with Mustapha; and much do I fear,
 “ that his rash courage will urge the ruin of our
 “ house, and that even religion may precipitate
 “ our downfall.” Yet the experience and authority

His death.

of Manuel preserved the peace and eluded the council; till, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and in the habit of a monk, he terminated his career, dividing his precious moveables among his children and the poor, his physicians and his favourite servants. Of his six sons³³, Andronicus the second was invested with the principality of Thessalonica, and died of a leprosy soon after the sale of that city to the Venetians and its final conquest by the Turks. Some fortunate incidents had restored Peloponnesus, or the Morea, to the empire; and in his more prosperous days, Manuel had fortified the narrow isthmus of six miles³⁴ with a stone wall and one hundred and fifty-three towers. The wall was overthrown by the first blast of the Ottomans: the fertile peninsula might have been sufficient for the four younger brothers, Theodore and Constantine, Demetrius and Thomas; but they wasted in domestic contests the remains of their strength; and the least successful of the rivals were reduced to a life of dependence in the Byzantine palace.

Zeal of
 John Palæo-
 logus II.

A. D.
 1425—1437.

The eldest of the sons of Manuel, John Palæologus the second, was acknowledged, after his father's death, as the sole emperor of the Greeks.

He immediately proceeded to repudiate his wife, and to contract a new marriage with the princess of Trebizond: beauty was in his eyes the first qualification of an empress; and the clergy had yielded to his firm assurance, that unless he might be indulged in a divorce, he would retire to a cloister, and leave the throne to his brother Constantine. The first, and in truth the only, victory of Palæologus was over a Jew³⁵, whom, after a long and learned dispute, he converted to the Christian faith; and this momentous conquest is carefully recorded in the history of the times. But he soon resumed the design of uniting the East and West; and, regardless of his father's advice, listened, as it should seem with sincerity, to the proposal of meeting the pope in a general council beyond the Adriatic. This dangerous project was encouraged by Martin the fifth, and coldly entertained by his successor Eugenius, till, after a tedious negociation, the emperor received a summons from a Latin assembly of a new character, the independent prelates of Basil, who styled themselves the representatives and judges of the Catholic church.

The Roman pontiff had fought and conquered in the cause of ecclesiastical freedom, but the victorious clergy were soon exposed to the tyranny of their deliverer; and his sacred character was invulnerable to those arms which they found so keen and effectual against the civil magistrate. Their great charter, the right of election, was annihilated by appeals, evaded by

Corruption
of the Latin
church.

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Schism,
A. D.
1377—1422.

Council of
Pisa,
A. D. 1409
of Constance,
A. D.
1414—1418.

trusts or commendams, disappointed by rever-
sionary grants, and superseded by previous and
arbitrary reservations³⁶. A public auction was
instituted in the court of Rome: the cardinals
and favourites were enriched with the spoils of
nations; and every country might complain that
the most important and valuable benefices were
accumulated on the heads of aliens and absentees.
During their residence at Avignon, the ambition
of the popes subsided in the meaner passions of
avarice³⁷ and luxury: they rigorously imposed on
the clergy the tributes of first fruits and tenths;
but they freely tolerated the impunity of vice,
disorder, and corruption. These manifold scan-
dals were aggravated by the great schism of the
West, which continued above fifty years. In
the furious conflicts of Rome and Avignon, the
vices of the rivals were mutually exposed; and
their precarious situation degraded their autho-
rity, relaxed their discipline, and multiplied their
wants and exactions. To heal the wounds, and
restore the monarchy, of the church, the synods
of Pisa and Constance³⁸ were successively con-
vened; but these great assemblies, conscious of
their strength, resolved to vindicate the privileges
of the Christian aristocracy. From a personal
sentence against two pontiffs, whom they re-
jected, and a third, their acknowledged sover-
eign, whom they deposed, the fathers of Con-
stance proceeded to examine the nature and limits
of the Roman supremacy; nor did they separate till
they had established the authority, above the

C H A P.

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pope, of a general council. It was enacted, that, for the government and reformation of the church, such assemblies should be held at regular intervals; and that each synod, before its dissolution, should appoint the time and place of the subsequent meeting. By the influence of the court of Rome, the next convocation at Sienna was easily eluded; but the bold and vigorous proceedings of the council of Basil³⁹ had almost been fatal to the reigning pontiff, Eugenius the fourth. A just suspicion of his design prompted the fathers to hasten the promulgation of their first decree, that the representatives of the church-militant on earth were invested with a divine and spiritual jurisdiction over all Christians, without excepting the pope; and that a general council could not be dissolved, prorogued, or transferred, unless by their free deliberation and consent. On the notice that Eugenius had fulminated a bull for that purpose, they ventured to summon, to admonish, to threaten, to censure, the contumacious successor of St. Peter. After many delays, to allow time for repentance, they finally declared, that, unless he submitted within the term of sixty days, he was suspended from the exercise of all temporal and ecclesiastical authority. And to mark their jurisdiction over the prince as well as the priest, they assumed the government of Avignon, annulled the alienation of the sacred patrimony, and protected Rome from the imposition of new taxes. Their boldness was justified, not only by the general opinion of the

of Basil,

A. D.

1431 — 1443.

Their opposition to Eugenius IV.

CHAP.
LXVI.

Negotiations
with the
Greeks,
A. D.
1434—1437.

clergy, but by the support and power of the first monarchs of Christendom: the emperor Sigismund declared himself the servant and protector of the synod; Germany and France adhered to their cause; the duke of Milan was the enemy of Eugenius, and he was driven from the Vatican by an insurrection of the Roman people. Rejected at the same time by his temporal and spiritual subjects, submission was his only choice: by a most humiliating bull, the pope repealed his own acts, and ratified those of the council; incorporated his legates and cardinals with that venerable body; and *seemed* to resign himself to the decrees of the supreme legislature. Their fame pervaded the countries of the East; and it was in their presence that Sigismund received the ambassadors of the Turkish sultan⁴⁰, who laid at his feet twelve large vases, filled with robes of silk and pieces of gold. The fathers of Basil aspired to the glory of reducing the Greeks, as well as the Bohemians, within the pale of the church; and their deputies invited the emperor and patriarch of Constantinople to unite with an assembly which possessed the confidence of the Western nations. Palæologus was not averse to the proposal; and his ambassadors were introduced with due honours into the Catholic senate. But the choice of the place appeared to be an insuperable obstacle, since he refused to pass the Alps, or the sea of Sicily, and positively required that the synod should be adjourned to some convenient city in Italy, or at least on the Danube.

The other articles of this treaty were more readily stipulated: it was agreed to defray the travelling expences of the emperor, with a train of seven hundred persons ⁴¹, to remit an immediate sum of eight thousand ducats ⁴² for the accommodation of the Greek clergy; and in his absence to grant a supply of ten thousand ducats, with three hundred archers and some gallies, for the protection of Constantinople. The city of Avignon advanced the funds for the preliminary expences; and the embarkation was prepared at Marseilles with some difficulty and delay.

In his distress, the friendship of Palæologus was disputed by the ecclesiastical powers of the West; but the dextrous activity of a monarch prevailed over the slow debates and inflexible temper of a republic. The decrees of Basil continually tended to circumscribe the despotism of the pope, and to erect a supreme and perpetual tribunal in the church. Eugenius was impatient of the yoke; and the union of the Greeks might afford a decent pretence for translating a rebellious synod from the Rhine to the Po. The independence of the fathers was lost if they passed the Alps: Savoy or Avignon, to which they acceded with reluctance, were described at Constantinople as situate far beyond the pillars of Hercules ⁴³; the emperor and his clergy were apprehensive of the dangers of a long navigation; they were offended by an haughty declaration, that after suppressing the *new* heresy of the Bohemians, the council would soon eradicate the *old* heresy of

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John Palæologus embarks in the pope's gallies,
A. D. 1437,
Nov. 24.

C H A P. the Greeks ⁴⁴. On the side of Eugenius, all was
 LXVI. smooth, and yielding, and respectful: and he
 invited the Byzantine monarch to heal by his pre-
 sence the schism of the Latin, as well as of the
 Eastern, church. Ferrara, near the coast of the
 Adriatic, was proposed for their amicable inter-
 view; and with some indulgence of forgery and
 theft, a surreptitious decree was procured, which
 transferred the synod, with its own consent, to
 that Italian city. Nine gallees were equipped for
 this service at Venice, and in the isle of Candia;
 their diligence anticipated the slower vessels of
 Basil: the Roman admiral was commissioned to
 burn, sink, and destroy ⁴⁵; and these priestly
 squadrons might have encountered each other
 in the same seas where Athens and Sparta had
 formerly contended for the pre-eminence of glory.
 Assaulted by the importunity of the factions, who
 were ready to fight for the possession of his per-
 son, Palæologus hesitated before he left his palace
 and country on a perilous experiment. His father's
 advice still dwelt on his memory: and reason
 must suggest, that since the Latins were divided
 among themselves, they could never unite in a
 foreign cause. Sigismund dissuaded the unseason-
 able adventure; his advice was impartial, since
 he adhered to the council; and it was enforced
 by the strange belief, that the German Cæsar
 would nominate a Greek his heir and successor
 in the empire of the West ⁴⁶. Even the Turkish
 sultan was a counsellor whom it might be unsafe
 to trust, but whom it was dangerous to offend.

Amurath was unskilled in the disputes, but he was apprehensive of the union, of the Christians. From his own treasures, he offered to relieve the wants of the Byzantine court; yet he declared with seeming magnanimity, that Constantinople should be secure and inviolate, in the absence of her sovereign ⁴⁷. The resolution of Palæologus was decided by the most splendid gifts and the most specious promises: he wished to escape for a while from a scene of danger and distress; and after dismissing with an ambiguous answer the messengers of the council, he declared his intention of embarking in the Roman galleys. The age of the patriarch Joseph was more susceptible of fear than of hope; he trembled at the perils of the sea, and expressed his apprehension, that his feeble voice, with thirty perhaps of his orthodox brethren, would be oppressed in a foreign land by the power and numbers of a Latin synod. He yielded to the royal mandate, to the flattering assurance, that he would be heard as the oracle of nations, and to the secret wish of learning from his brother of the West, to deliver the church from the yoke of kings ⁴⁸. The five *cross-bearers* or dignitaries of St. Sophia, were bound to attend his person; and one of these, the great ecclesiarch or preacher, Sylvester Syropulus ⁴⁹, has composed ⁵⁰ a free and curious history of the *false* union ⁵¹. Of the clergy that reluctantly obeyed the summons of the emperor and the patriarch, submission was the first duty, and patience the most useful virtue. In a chosen list

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of twenty bishops, we discover the metropolitan titles of Heraclea and Cyzicus, Nice and Nicomedia, Ephesus and Trebizond, and the personal merit of Mark and Bessarion, who, in the confidence of their learning and eloquence, were promoted to the episcopal rank. Some monks and philosophers were named to display the science and sanctity of the Greek church; and the service of the choir was performed by a select band of singers and musicians. The patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, appeared by their genuine or fictitious deputies; the primate of Russia represented a national church, and the Greeks might contend with the Latins in the extent of their spiritual empire. The precious vases of St. Sophia were exposed to the winds and waves, that the patriarch might officiate with becoming splendour; whatever gold the emperor could procure, was expended in the massy ornaments of his bed and chariot⁵²: and while they affected to maintain the prosperity of their ancient fortune, they quarrelled for the division of fifteen thousand ducats, the first alms of the Roman pontiff. After the necessary preparations, John Palæologus, with a numerous train, accompanied by his brother Demetrius, and the most respectable persons of the church and state, embarked in eight vessels with sails and oars, which steered through the Turkish streights of Gallipoli to the Archipelago, the Morea, and the Adriatic Gulf⁵³.

After a tedious and troublesome navigation of seventy-seven days, this religious squadron cast anchor before Venice; and their reception proclaimed the joy and magnificence of that powerful republic. In the command of the world, the modest Augustus had never claimed such honours from his subjects as were paid to his feeble successor by an independent state. Seated on the poop, on a lofty throne, he received the visit, or, in the Greek style, the *adoration*, of the doge and senators⁵⁴. They sailed in the Bucentaur, which was accompanied by twelve stately gallies: the sea was overspread with innumerable gondolas of pomp and pleasure; the air resounded with music and acclamations; the mariners, and even the vessels, were dressed in silk and gold; and in all the emblems and pageants, the Roman eagles were blended with the lions of St. Mark. The triumphal procession, ascending the great canal, passed under the bridge of the Rialto; and the eastern strangers gazed with admiration on the palaces, the churches, and the populousness of a city that seems to float on the bosom of the waves⁵⁵. They sighed to behold the spoils and trophies with which it had been decorated after the sack of Constantinople. After an hospitable entertainment of fifteen days, Palæologus pursued his journey by land and water from Venice to Ferrara: and on this occasion, the pride of the Vatican was tempered by policy to indulge the ancient dignity of the emperor of the East. He made his entry on a *black* horse; but a milk-white

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His triumphal entry at Venice,

A. D. 1438.

February 9;

into Ferrara,
February 28.

C H A P. LXVI. steed, whose trappings were embroidered with golden eagles, was led before him; and the canopy was borne over his head by the princes of Este, the sons or kinsmen of Nicholas, marquis of the city, and a sovereign more powerful than himself⁶. Palæologus did not alight till he reached the bottom of the stair-case: the pope advanced to the door of the apartment; refused his proffered genuflexion; and, after a paternal embrace, conducted the emperor to a seat on his left-hand. Nor would the patriarch descend from his galley, till a ceremony, almost equal, had been stipulated between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. The latter was saluted by his brother with a kiss of union and charity: nor would any of the Greek ecclesiastics submit to kiss the feet of the Western primate. On the opening of the synod, the place of honour in the centre was claimed by the temporal and ecclesiastical chiefs; and it was only by alleging that his predecessors had not assisted in person at Nice or Chalcedon, that Eugenius could evade the ancient precedents of Constantine and Marcian. After much debate, it was agreed that the right and left sides of the church should be occupied by the two nations: that the solitary chair of St. Peter should be raised the first of the Latin line; and that the throne of the Greek emperor, at the head of his clergy, should be equal and opposite to the second place, the vacant seat of the emperor of the West⁷.

But

But as soon as festivity and form had given place to a more serious treaty, the Greeks were dissatisfied with their journey, with themselves, and with the pope. The artful pencil of his emissaries had painted him in a prosperous state, at the head of the princes and prelates of Europe, obedient, at his voice, to believe and to arm. The thin appearance of the universal synod of Ferrara betrayed his weakness; and the Latins opened the first session with only five archbishops, eighteen bishops, and ten abbots, the greatest part of whom were the subjects or countrymen of the Italian pontiff. Except the duke of Burgundy, none of the potentates of the West condescended to appear in person, or by their ambassadors, nor was it possible to suppress the judicial acts of Basil against the dignity and person of Eugenius, which were finally concluded by a new election. Under these circumstances, a truce or delay was asked and granted, till Palæologus could expect from the consent of the Latins some temporal reward for an unpopular union; and, after the first session, the public proceedings were adjourned above six months. The emperor, with a chosen band of his favourites and *Janizaries*, fixed his summer residence at a pleasant spacious monastery, six miles from Ferrara; forgot, in the pleasures of the chace, the distress of the church and state; and persisted in destroying the game, without listening to the just complaints of the marquis or the husbandman⁵⁸. In the mean while, his unfortunate

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Council of
the Greeks
and Latins at
Ferrara and
Florence,
A. D. 1438,
October 8—
A. D. 1439,
July 6.

CHAP. LXVI. Greeks were exposed to all the miseries of exile and poverty; for the support of each stranger, a monthly allowance was assigned of three or four gold florins; and although the entire sum did not amount to seven hundred florins, a long arrear was repeatedly incurred by the indigence or policy of the Roman court⁵⁹. They sighed for a speedy deliverance, but their escape was prevented by a triple chain: a passport from their superiors was required at the gates of Ferrara; the government of Venice had engaged to arrest and send back the fugitives; and inevitable punishment awaited them at Constantinople; excommunication, fines, and a sentence, which did not respect the sacerdotal dignity, that they should be stripped naked and publicly whipped⁶⁰. It was only by the alternative of hunger or dispute that the Greeks could be persuaded to open the first conference; and they yielded with extreme reluctance to attend from Ferrara to Florence the rear of a flying synod. This new translation was urged by inevitable necessity; the city was visited by the plague; the fidelity of the marquis might be suspected; the mercenary troops of the duke of Milan were at the gates; and as they occupied Romagna, it was not without difficulty and danger that the pope, the emperor, and the bishops, explored their way through the unfrequented paths of the Apennine⁶¹.

Yet all these obstacles were surmounted by time and policy. The violence of the fathers of

Basil rather promoted than injured the cause of Eugenius: the nations of Europe abhorred the schism, and disowned the election, of Felix the fifth, who was successively a duke of Savoy, an hermit, and a pope; and the great princes were gradually reclaimed by his competitor to a favourable neutrality and a firm attachment. The legates, with some respectable members, deserted to the Roman army, which insensibly rose in numbers and reputation: the council of Basil was reduced to thirty-nine bishops, and three hundred of the inferior clergy⁶²; while the Latins of Florence could produce the subscriptions of the pope himself, eight cardinals, two patriarchs, eight archbishops, fifty-two bishops, and forty-five abbots, or chiefs of religious orders. After the labour of nine months, and the debates of twenty-five sessions, they attained the advantage and glory of the re-union of the Greeks. Four principal questions had been agitated between the two churches: 1. The use of unleavened bread in the communion of Christ's body. 2. The nature of purgatory. 3. The supremacy of the pope. And, 4. The single or double procession of the Holy Ghost. The cause of either nation was managed by ten theological champions: the Latins were supported by the inexhaustible eloquence of cardinal Julian; and Mark of Ephesus and Bessarion of Nice were the bold and able leaders of the Greek forces. We may bestow some praise on the progress of human reason, by observing, that the first of these questions was

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now treated as an immaterial rite, which might innocently vary with the fashion of the age and country. With regard to the second, both parties were agreed in the belief of an intermediate state of purgation for the venial sins of the faithful; and whether their souls were purified by elemental fire, was a doubtful point, which in a few years might be conveniently settled on the spot by the disputants. The claims of supremacy appeared of a more weighty and substantial kind; yet by the Orientals the Roman bishop had ever been respected as the first of the five patriarchs; nor did they scruple to admit, that his jurisdiction should be exercised agreeable to the holy canons; a vague allowance, which might be defined or eluded by occasional convenience. The procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father alone, or from the Father and the Son, was an article of faith which had sunk much deeper into the minds of men; and in the sessions of Ferrara and Florence, the Latin addition of *filioque* was subdivided into two questions, whether it were legal, and whether it were orthodox. Perhaps it may not be necessary to boast on this subject of my own impartial indifference; but I must think that the Greeks were strongly supported by the prohibition of the council of Chalcedon, against adding any article whatsoever to the creed of Nice, or rather of Constantinople". In earthly affairs, it is not easy to conceive how an assembly of legislators can bind their successors invested with powers equal to their own. But the dictates

of inspiration must be true and unchangeable; nor should a private bishop, or a provincial synod, have presumed to innovate against the judgment of the Catholic church. On the substance of the doctrine, the controversy was equal and endless: reason is confounded by the procession of a deity; the gospel, which lay on the altar, was silent; the various texts of the fathers might be corrupted by fraud or entangled by sophistry; and the Greeks were ignorant of the characters and writings of the Latin saints⁶⁴. Of this at least we may be sure, that neither side could be convinced by the arguments of their opponents. Prejudice may be enlightened by reason, and a superficial glance may be rectified by a clear and more perfect view of an object adapted to our faculties. But the bishops and monks had been taught from their infancy to repeat a form of words; their national and personal honour depended on the repetition of the same sounds; and their narrow minds were hardened and inflamed by the acrimony of a public dispute.

While they were lost in a cloud of dust and darkness, the pope and emperor were desirous of a seeming union, which could alone accomplish the purposes of their interview; and the obstinacy of public dispute was softened by the arts of private and personal negotiation. The patriarch Joseph had sunk under the weight of age and infirmities; his dying voice breathed the counsels of charity and concord, and his vacant benefice

Negotiations
with the
Greeks.

C H A P. might tempt the hopes of the ambitious clergy.
 LXVI. The ready and active obedience of the arch-
 bishops of Russia and Nice, of Isidore and Bessarion, was prompted and recompensed by their speedy promotion to the dignity of cardinals. Bessarion, in the first debates, had stood forth the most strenuous and eloquent champion of the Greek church; and if the apostate, the bastard, was reprobated by his country⁶⁵, he appears in ecclesiastical story a rare example of a patriot who was recommended to court-favour by loud opposition and well-timed compliance. With the aid of his two spiritual coadjutors, the emperor applied his arguments to the general situation and personal character of the bishops, and each was successively moved by authority and example. Their revenues were in the hands of the Turks, their persons in those of the Latins: an episcopal treasure, three robes and forty ducats, was soon exhausted⁶⁶: the hopes of their return still depended on the ships of Venice and the alms of Rome; and such was their indigence, that their arrears, the payment of a debt, would be accepted as a favour, and might operate as a bribe⁶⁷. The danger and relief of Constantinople might excuse some prudent and pious dissimulation; and it was insinuated, that the obstinate heretics who should resist the consent of the East and West, would be abandoned in a hostile land to the revenge or justice of the Roman pontiff⁶⁸. In the first private assembly of the Greeks, the formulary of union was approved by twenty-four,

and rejected by twelve, members: but the five *cross-bearers* of St. Sophia, who aspired to represent the patriarch, were disqualified by ancient discipline; and their right of voting was transferred to an obsequious train of monks, grammarians, and profane laymen. The will of the monarch produced a false and fervile unanimity, and no more than two patriots had courage to speak their own sentiments and those of their country. Demetrius, the emperor's brother, retired to Venice, that he might not be witness of the union; and Mark of Ephesus, mistaking perhaps his pride for his conscience, disclaimed all communion with the Latin heretics, and avowed himself the champion and confessor of the orthodox creed⁶⁹. In the treaty between the two nations, several forms of consent were proposed, such as might satisfy the Latins, without dishonouring the Greeks: and they weighed the scruples of words and syllables, till the theological balance trembled with a slight preponderance in favour of the Vatican. It was agreed (I must intreat the attention of the reader), that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father *and* the Son, as from one principle and one substance; that he proceeds *by* the Son, being of the same nature and substance, and that he proceeds from the Father *and* the Son, by one *spiration* and production. It is less difficult to understand the articles of the preliminary treaty; that the pope should defray all the expences of the Greeks in their return home; that he should annually maintain two gallies and

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C H A P. three hundred foldiers for the defence of Constantinople; that all the ships which transported pilgrims to Jerusalem, should be obliged to touch at that port, that as often as they were required, the pope should furnish ten gallies for a year, or twenty for six months; and that he should powerfully solicit the princes of Europe, if the emperor had occasion for land-forces.

Eugenius
deposed at
Basil,
A. D. 1438,
June 25.

Re-union of
the Greeks
at Florence,
A. D. 1438,
July 6.

The same year, and almost the same day, were marked by the deposition of Eugenius at Basil; and, at Florence, by his re-union of the Greeks and Latins. In the former synod (which he styled indeed an assembly of dæmons), the pope was branded with the guilt of simony, perjury, tyranny, heresy, and schism⁷⁰; and declared to be incorrigible in his vices, unworthy of any title, and incapable of holding any ecclesiastical office. In the latter, he was revered as the true and holy vicar of Christ, who, after a separation of six hundred years, had reconciled the Catholics of the East and West, in one fold, and under one shepherd. The act of union was subscribed by the pope, the emperor, and the principal members of both churches; even by those who, like Syropulus⁷¹, had been deprived of the right of voting. Two copies might have sufficed for the East and West; but Eugenius was not satisfied, unless four authentic and similar transcripts were signed and attested as the monuments of his victory⁷². On a memorable day, the sixth of July, the successors of St. Peter and Constantine ascended their thrones; the two nations

assembled in the cathedral of Florence; their representatives, cardinal Julian and Bessarion archbishop of Nice, appeared in the pulpit, and, after reading in their respective tongues the act of union, they mutually embraced in the name and the presence of their applauding brethren. The pope and his ministers then officiated according to the Roman liturgy; the creed was chaunted with the addition of *filioque*; the acquiescence of the Greeks was poorly excused by their ignorance of the harmonious, but inarticulate, sounds⁷³; and the more scrupulous Latins refused any public celebration of the Byzantine rite. Yet the emperor and his clergy were not totally unmindful of national honour. The treaty was ratified by their consent; it was tacitly agreed that no innovation should be attempted in their creed or ceremonies; they spared, and secretly respected, the generous firmness of Mark of Ephesus; and on the decease of the patriarch, they refused to elect his successor, except in the cathedral of St. Sophia. In the distribution of public and private rewards, the liberal pontiff exceeded their hopes and his promises: the Greeks, with less pomp and pride, returned by the same road of Ferrara and Venice; and their reception at Constantinople was such as will be described in the following chapter⁷⁴. The success of the first trial encouraged Eugenius to repeat the same edifying scenes; and the deputies of the Armenians, the Maronites, the Jacobites of Syria and Egypt, the Nestorians and the Æthiopians, were successively introduced, to kiss

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Their return
to Constanti-
nople,
A. D. 1440,
February 1,

E H A P. the feet of the Roman pontiff, and to announce
 LXVI. the obedience and the orthodoxy of the East.
 These Oriental embassies, unknown in the coun-
 tries which they presumed to represent⁷⁵, diffused
 over the West the fame of Eugenius: and a
 clamour was artfully propagated against the rem-
 nant of a schism in Switzerland and Savoy, which
 alone impeded the harmony of the Christian world.
 The vigour of opposition was succeeded by the
 lassitude of despair: the council of Basil was
 silently dissolved; and Fœlix, renouncing the
 tiara, again withdrew to the devout or delicious
 hermitage of Ripaille⁷⁶. A general peace was
 secured by mutual acts of oblivion and indemnity:
 all ideas of reformation subsided; the popes con-
 tinued to exercise and abuse their ecclesiastical
 despotism; nor has Rome been since disturbed
 by the mischiefs of a contested election⁷⁷.

Final peace
 of the
 church,
 A. D. 1449.

State of the
 Greek lan-
 guage at
 Constanti-
 nople,
 A. D.

1300 — 1453.

The journies of three emperors were unavail-
 ing for their temporal, or perhaps their spiritual:
 salvation; but they were productive of a bene-
 ficial consequence; the revival of the Greek learn-
 ing in Italy, from whence it was propagated to
 the last nations of the West and North. In their
 lowest servitude and depression, the subjects of
 the Byzantine throne were still possessed of a
 golden key that could unlock the treasures of
 antiquity; of a musical and prolific language,
 that gives a soul to the objects of sense, and a
 body to the abstractions of philosophy. Since the
 barriers of the monarchy, and even of the capit-
 al, had been trampled under foot, the various

Barbarians had doubtless corrupted the form and substance of the national dialect ; and ample glossaries have been composed, to interpret a multitude of words, of Arabic, Turkish, Sclavonian, Latin, or French origin⁷⁸. But a purer idiom was spoken in the court and taught in the college; and the flourishing state of the language is described, and perhaps embellished, by a learned Italian⁷⁹, who, by a long residence and noble marriage⁸⁰, was naturalized at Constantinople about thirty years before the Turkish conquest. “ The vulgar speech,” says Philelphus⁸¹, “ has
 “ been depraved by the people, and infected by
 “ the multitude of strangers and merchants, who
 “ every day flock to the city and mingle with
 “ the inhabitants. It is from the disciples of such
 “ a school that the Latin language received the
 “ versions of Aristotle and Plato; so obscure in
 “ sense, and in spirit so poor. But the Greeks
 “ who have escaped the contagion, are those
 “ whom *we* follow; and they alone are worthy
 “ of our imitation. In familiar discourse, they
 “ still speak the tongue of Aristophanes and
 “ Euripides, of the historians and philosophers
 “ of Athens; and the style of their writings is
 “ still more elaborate and correct. The persons
 “ who, by their birth and offices, are attached
 “ to the Byzantine court, are those who main-
 “ tain, with the least alloy, the ancient standard
 “ of elegance and purity; and the native graces
 “ of language most conspicuously shine among
 “ the noble matrons, who are excluded from all

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“ intercourse with foreigners. With foreigners do
“ I say? They live retired and sequestered from the
“ eyes of their fellow-citizens. Seldom are they seen
“ in the streets; and when they leave their houses,
“ it is in the dusk of evening, on visits to the
“ churches and their nearest kindred. On these
“ occasions, they are on horseback, covered with
“ a veil, and encompassed by their parents, their
“ husbands, or their servants⁸². ”

Among the Greeks, a numerous and opulent clergy was dedicated to the service of religion: their monks and bishops have ever been distinguished by the gravity and austerity of their manners; nor were they diverted, like the Latin priests, by the pursuits and pleasures of a secular, and even military, life. After a large deduction for the time and talents that were lost in the devotion, the laziness, and the discord, of the church and cloyster, the more inquisitive and ambitious minds would explore the sacred and profane erudition of their native language. The ecclesiastics presided over the education of youth; the schools of philosophy and eloquence were perpetuated till the fall of the empire: and it may be affirmed, that more books and more knowledge were included within the walls of Constantinople than could be dispersed over the extensive countries of the West⁸³. But an important distinction has been already noticed: the Greeks were stationary or retrograde, while the Latins were advancing with a rapid and progressive motion. The nations were excited by the spirit

Comparison
of the Greeks
and Latins.

of independence and emulation; and even the little world of the Italian states contained more people and industry than the decreasing circle of the Byzantine empire. In Europe, the lower ranks of society were relieved from the yoke of feudal servitude; and freedom is the first step to curiosity and knowledge. The use, however rude and corrupt, of the Latin tongue had been preserved by superstition; the universities, from Bologna to Oxford⁸⁴, were peopled with thousands of scholars; and their misguided ardour might be directed to more liberal and manly studies. In the resurrection of science, Italy was the first that cast away her shroud; and the eloquent Petrarch, by his lessons and his example, may justly be applauded as the first harbinger of day. A purer style of composition, a more generous and rational strain of sentiment, flowed from the study and imitation of the writers of ancient Rome; and the disciples of Cicero and Virgil approached, with reverence and love, the sanctuary of their Grecian masters. In the sack of Constantinople, the French, and even the Venetians, had despised and destroyed the works of Lysippus and Homer: the monuments of art may be annihilated by a single blow; but the immortal mind is renewed and multiplied by the copies of the pen; and such copies it was the ambition of Petrarch and his friends to possess and understand. The arms of the Turks undoubtedly pressed the flight of the muses; yet we may tremble at the

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Revival of
the Greek
learning in
Italy.

thought, that Greece might have been overwhelmed, with her schools and libraries, before Europe had emerged from the deluge of barbarism; that the seeds of science might have been scattered by the winds, before the Italian soil was prepared for their cultivation.

The most learned Italians of the fifteenth century have confessed and applauded the restoration of Greek literature, after a long oblivion of many hundred years⁸⁵. Yet in that country, and beyond the Alps, some names are quoted; some profound scholars, who in the darker ages were honourably distinguished by their knowledge of the Greek tongue; and national vanity has been loud in the praise of such rare examples of erudition. Without scrutinizing the merit of individuals, truth must observe that their science is without a cause, and without an effect; that it was easy for them to satisfy themselves and their more ignorant contemporaries; and that the idiom, which they had so marvellously acquired, was transcribed in few manuscripts, and was not taught in any university of the West. In a corner of Italy, it faintly existed as the popular, or at least as the ecclesiastical, dialect⁸⁶. The first impression of the Doric and Ionic colonies has never been completely erased: the Calabrian churches were long attached to the throne of Constantinople; and the monks of St. Basil pursued their studies in mount Athos and the schools of the East. Calabria was the native country of Barlaam, who

has already appeared as a sectary and an ambassador; and Barlaam was the first who revived, beyond the Alps, the memory, or at least the writings, of Homer⁸⁷. He is described, by Petrarch and Boccaccio⁸⁸, as a man of a diminutive stature, though truly great in the measure of learning and genius; of a piercing discernment, though of a slow and painful elocution. For many ages (as they affirm) Greece had not produced his equal in the knowledge of history, grammar, and philosophy; and his merit was celebrated in the attestations of the princes and doctors of Constantinople. One of these attestations is still extant; and the emperor Cantacuzene, the protector of his adversaries, is forced to allow that Euclid, Aristotle, and Plato, were familiar to that profound and subtle logician⁸⁹. In the court of Avignon, he formed an intimate connection with Petrarch⁹⁰, the first of the Latin scholars; and the desire of mutual instruction was the principle of their literary commerce. The Tuscan applied himself with eager curiosity and assiduous diligence to the study of the Greek language; and in a laborious struggle with the dryness and difficulty of the first rudiments, he began to reach the sense, and to feel the spirit, of poets and philosophers, whose minds were congenial to his own. But he was soon deprived of the society and lessons of this useful assistant: Barlaam relinquished his fruitless embassy; and, on his return to Greece, he rashly provoked the swarms of fanatic monks, by attempting to

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Lessons of
Barlaam,
A. D. 1339,

Studies of
Petrarch,
A. D.

1339—1374

C H A P. substitute the light of reason to that of their navel.

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After a separation of three years, the two friends again met in the court of Naples; but the generous pupil renounced the fairest occasion of improvement; and by his recommendation Barlaam was finally settled in a small bishopric of his native Calabria⁹¹. The manifold avocations of Petrarch, love and friendship, his various correspondence and frequent journies, the Roman laurel, and his elaborate compositions in prose and verse, in Latin and Italian, diverted him from a foreign idiom; and as he advanced in life, the attainment of the Greek language was the object of his wishes, rather than of his hopes. When he was about fifty years of age, a Byzantine ambassador, his friend, and a master of both tongues, presented him with a copy of Homer; and the answer of Petrarch is at once expressive of his eloquence, gratitude, and regret. After celebrating the generosity of the donor, and the value of a gift more precious in his estimation than gold or rubies, he thus proceeds: "Your present
 " of the genuine and original text of the divine
 " poet, the fountain of all invention, is worthy
 " of yourself and of me: you have fulfilled your
 " promise, and satisfied my desires. Yet your
 " liberality is still imperfect: with Homer you
 " should have given me yourself; a guide, who
 " could lead me into the fields of light, and
 " disclose to my wondering eyes the specious
 " miracles of the Iliad and Odysssey. But, alas!
 " Homer is dumb, or I am deaf; nor is it in my
 " power

“ power to enjoy the beauty which I possess. I
 “ have seated him by the side of Plato, the prince
 “ of poets near the prince of philosophers; and
 “ I glory in the sight of my illustrious guests.
 “ Of their immortal writings, whatever had been
 “ translated into the Latin idiom, I had already
 “ acquired; but, if there be no profit, there is
 “ some pleasure, in beholding these venerable
 “ Greeks in their proper and national habit. I
 “ am delighted with the aspect of Homer; and as
 “ often as I embrace the silent volume, I exclaim
 “ with a sigh, illustrious bard! with what plea-
 “ sure should I listen to thy song, if my sense of
 “ hearing were not obstructed and lost by the
 “ death of one friend, and in the much lamented
 “ absence of another. Nor do I yet despair; and
 “ the example of Cato suggests some comfort and
 “ hope, since it was in the last period of age
 “ that he attained the knowledge of the Greek
 “ letters ”.

The prize which eluded the efforts of Petrarch, Of Boccace
 was obtained by the fortune and industry of his A. D. 1360,
 friend Boccace⁹³, the father of the Tuscan prose. etc.
 That popular writer, who derives his reputation
 from the Decameron, an hundred novels of plea-
 santry and love, may aspire to the more serious
 praise of restoring in Italy the study of the Greek
 language. In the year one thousand three hundred
 and sixty, a disciple of Barlaam, whose name
 was Leo, or Leontius Pilatus, was detained in
 his way to Avignon by the advice and hospitality
 of Boccace, who lodged the stranger in his house,

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Leo Pilatus,
first Greek
professor at
Florence, and
in the West,
A. D.
1360—1383.

prevailed on the republic of Florence to allow him an annual stipend, and devoted his leisure to the first Greek professor, who taught that language in the Western countries of Europe. The appearance of Leo might disgust the most eager disciple; he was clothed in the mantle of a philosopher, or a mendicant; his countenance was hideous; his face was overshadowed with black hair; his beard long and uncombed; his deportment rustic; his temper gloomy and inconstant; nor could he grace his discourse with the ornaments, or even the perspicuity, of Latin elocution. But his mind was stored with a treasure of Greek learning: history and fable, philosophy and grammar, were alike at his command; and he read the poems of Homer in the schools of Florence. It was from his explanation that Boccace composed and transcribed a literal prose version of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which satisfied the thirst of his friend Petrarch, and which perhaps, in the succeeding century, was clandestinely used by Laurentius Valla, the Latin interpreter. It was from his narratives that the same Boccace collected the materials for his treatise on the genealogy of the heathen gods, a work, in that age, of stupendous erudition, and which he ostentatiously sprinkled with Greek characters and passages, to excite the wonder and applause of his more ignorant readers⁹⁴. The first steps of learning are slow and laborious; no more than ten votaries of Homer could be enumerated in all Italy; and neither Rome, nor Venice,

nor Naples, could add a single name to this studious catalogue. But their numbers would have multiplied, their progress would have been accelerated, if the inconstant Leo, at the end of three years, had not relinquished an honourable and beneficial station. In his passage, Petrarch entertained him at Padua a short time; he enjoyed the scholar, but was justly offended with the gloomy and unfocial temper of the man. Discontented with the world and with himself, Leo depreciated his present enjoyments; while absent persons and objects were dear to his imagination. In Italy he was a Thessalian, in Greece a native of Calabria; in the company of the Latins he disdained their language, religion, and manner; no sooner was he landed at Constantinople, than he again sighed for the wealth of Venice and the elegance of Florence. His Italian friends were deaf to his importunity; he depended on their curiosity and indulgence, and embarked on a second voyage; but on his entrance into the Adriatic, the ship was assailed by a tempest, and the unfortunate teacher, who like Ulysses had fastened himself to the mast, was struck dead by a flash of lightning. The humane Petrarch dropt a tear on his disaster; but he was most anxious to learn whether some copy of Euripides or Sophocles might not be saved from the hands of the mariners⁹⁵.

But the faint rudiments of Greek learning, which Petrarch had encouraged and Boccace had planted, soon withered and expired. The

Foundation
of the Greek
language in
Italy by Ma-

C H A P. LXVI. succeeding generation was content for a while
 with the improvement of Latin eloquence: nor
 was it before the end of the fourteenth century,
 that a new and perpetual flame was rekindled in
 Italy ⁹⁶. Previous to his own journey, the
 emperor Manuel dispatched his envoys and orators
 to implore the compassion of the Western princes.
 Of these envoys, the most conspicuous, or the
 most learned, was Manuel Chrysoloras ⁹⁷, of
 noble birth, and whose Roman ancestors are
 supposed to have migrated with the great Con-
 stantine. After visiting the courts of France and
 England, where he obtained some contributions
 and more promises, the envoy was invited to
 assume the office of a professor; and Florence
 had again the honour of this second invitation.
 By his knowledge, not only of the Greek, but
 of the Latin, tongue, Chrysoloras deserved the
 stipend, and surpassed the expectation, of the
 republic: his school was frequented by a crowd
 of disciples of every rank and age; and one of
 these, in a general history, has described his
 motives and his success. “At that time,” says
 Leonard Aretin ⁹⁸, “I was a student of the civil
 “law; but my soul was inflamed with the love
 “of letters; and I bestowed some application on
 “the sciences of logic and rhetoric. On the
 “arrival of Manuel, I hesitated whether I should
 “desert my legal studies, or relinquish this
 “golden opportunity; and thus, in the ardour
 “of youth, I communed with my own mind—
 “Wilt thou be wanting to thyself and thy

Manuel Chryso-
 loras,

A. D.
 1390—1415.

“ fortune? Wilt thou refuse to be introduced to
 “ a familiar converse with Homer, Plato, and
 “ Demosthenes? with those poets, philosophers,
 “ and orators, of whom such wonders are related,
 “ and who are celebrated by every age as the
 “ great masters of human science? Of professors
 “ and scholars in civil law, a sufficient supply
 “ will always be found in our universities; but
 “ a teacher, and such a teacher, of the Greek
 “ language, if he once be suffered to escape,
 “ may never afterwards be retrieved. Convinced
 “ by these reasons, I gave myself to Chrysoloras;
 “ and so strong was my passion, that the lessons
 “ which I had imbibed in the day were the con-
 “ stant subject of my nightly dreams.” At
 the same time and place, the Latin classics were
 explained by John of Ravenna, the domestic
 pupil of Petrarch¹⁰⁰: the Italians, who illustrated
 their age and country, were formed in this
 double school; and Florence became the fruitful
 seminary of Greek and Roman erudition¹⁰¹. The
 presence of the emperor recalled Chrysoloras
 from the college to the court; but he afterwards
 taught at Pavia and Rome with equal industry
 and applause. The remainder of his life, about
 fifteen years, was divided between Italy and
 Constantinople; between embassies and lessons.
 In the noble office of enlightening a foreign
 nation, the grammarian was not unmindful of a
 more sacred duty to his prince and country; and
 Emanuel Chrysoloras died at Constance on a
 public mission from the emperor to the council.

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The Greeks
in Italy,

A. D.

1400—1500.

Cardinal Bessarion; etc.

After his example, the restoration of the Greek letters in Italy was prosecuted by a series of emigrants, who were destitute of fortune, and endowed with learning, or at least with language. From the terror or oppression of the Turkish arms, the natives of Thessalonica and Constantinople escaped to a land of freedom, curiosity, and wealth. The synod introduced into Florence the lights of the Greek church and the oracles of the Platonic philosophy: and the fugitives who adhered to the union, had the double merit of renouncing their country, not only for the Christian, but for the Catholic, cause. A patriot, who sacrifices his party and conscience to the allurements of favour, may be possessed however of the private and social virtues: he no longer hears the reproachful epithets of slave and apostate; and the consideration which he acquires among his new associates, will restore in his own eyes the dignity of his character. The prudent conformity of Bessarion was rewarded with the Roman purple: he fixed his residence in Italy; and the Greek cardinal, the titular patriarch of Constantinople, was respected as the chief and protector of his nation¹⁰²: his abilities were exercised in the legations of Bologna, Venice, Germany, and France; and his election to the chair of St. Peter floated for a moment on the uncertain breath of a conclave¹⁰³. His ecclesiastical honours diffused a splendour and pre-eminence over his literary merit and service: his palace was a school; as often as the cardinal visited the Vatican, he was

attended by a learned train of both nations¹⁰⁴; of men applauded by themselves and the public; and whose writings, now overspread with dust, were popular and useful in their own times. I shall not attempt to enumerate the restorers of Grecian literature in the fifteenth century: and it may be sufficient to mention with gratitude the names of Theodore Gaza, of George of Trebizond, of John Argyropulus, and Demetrius Chalcocondyles, who taught their native language in the schools of Florence and Rome. Their labours were not inferior to those of Bessarion, whose purple they revered, and whose fortune was the secret object of their envy. But the life of these grammarians was humble and obscure: they had declined the lucrative paths of the church; their dress and manners secluded them from the commerce of the world; and since they were confined to the merit, they might be content with the rewards, of learning. From this character, Janus Lascaris¹⁰⁵ will deserve an exception. His eloquence, politeness, and Imperial descent, recommended him to the French monarchs; and in the same cities he was alternately employed to teach and to negotiate. Duty and interest prompted them to cultivate the study of the Latin language; and the most successful attained the faculty of writing and speaking with fluency and elegance in a foreign idiom. But they ever retained the inveterate vanity of their country: their praise, or at least their esteem, was reserved for the national writers, to whom they owed their fame

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Their faults
and merits.

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and subsistence; and they sometimes betrayed their contempt in licentious criticism or satire on Virgil's poetry and the oratory of Tully¹⁰⁶. The superiority of these masters arose from the familiar use of a living language; and their first disciples were incapable of discerning how far they had degenerated from the knowledge, and even the practice, of their ancestors. A vicious pronunciation¹⁰⁷, which they introduced, was banished from the schools by the reason of the succeeding age. Of the power of the Greek accents they were ignorant: and those musical notes, which, from an Attic tongue, and to an Attic ear, must have been the secret soul of harmony, were to their eyes, as to our own, no more than mute and unmeaning marks; in prose superfluous, and troublesome in verse. The art of grammar they truly possessed: the valuable fragments of Apollonius and Herodian were transfused into their lessons; and their treatises of syntax and etymology, though devoid of philosophic spirit, are still useful to the Greek student. In the shipwreck of the Byzantine libraries, each fugitive seized a fragment of treasure, a copy of some author, who, without his industry, might have perished: the transcripts were multiplied by an assiduous, and sometimes an elegant, pen; and the text was corrected and explained by their own comments, or those of the elder scholiasts. The sense, though not the spirit, of the Greek classics, was interpreted to the Latin world: the beauties of style evaporate in a version; but the

judgment of Theodore Gaza selected the more solid works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, and their natural histories of animals and plants opened a rich fund of genuine and experimental science.

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Yet the fleeting shadows of metaphysics were pursued with more curiosity and ardour. After a long oblivion, Plato was revived in Italy by a venerable Greek¹⁰⁸, who taught in the house of Cosmo of Medicis. While the synod of Florence was involved in theological debate, some beneficial consequences might flow from the study of his elegant philosophy; his style is the purest standard of the Attic dialect; and his sublime thoughts are sometimes adapted to familiar conversation, and sometimes adorned with the richest colours of poetry and eloquence. The dialogues of Plato are a dramatic picture of the life and death of a sage; and, as often as he descends from the clouds, his moral system inculcates the love of truth, of our country, and of mankind. The precept and example of Socrates recommended a modest doubt and liberal enquiry: and if the Platonists, with blind devotion, adored the visions and errors of their divine master, their enthusiasm might correct the dry, dogmatic method of the Peripatetic school. So equal, yet so opposite, are the merits of Plato and Aristotle, that they may be balanced in endless controversy; but some spark of freedom may be produced by the collision of adverse servitude. The modern Greeks were divided between the two sects: with more fury than skill they fought under the

The Platonic
philosophy.

Emulation
and progress
of the Latin

Nicholas V.
A. D. 1447—1454

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banner of their leaders; and the field of battle was removed in their flight from Constantinople to Rome. But this philosophical debate soon degenerated into an angry and personal quarrel of grammarians: and Bessarion, though an advocate for Plato, protected the national honour, by interposing the advice and authority of a mediator. In the gardens of the Medici, the academical doctrine was enjoyed by the polite and learned: but their philosophic society was quickly dissolved; and if the writings of the Attic sage were perused in the closet, the more powerful Stagyrice continued to reign, the oracle of the church and school¹⁰⁹.

Emulation
and progress
of the Latins.

Nicholas V.
A. D.
1447—1455.

I have fairly represented the literary merits of the Greeks; yet it must be confessed, that they were seconded and surpassed by the ardour of the Latins. Italy was divided into many independent states; and at that time, it was the ambition of princes and republics to vie with each other in the encouragement and reward of literature. The fame of Nicholas the fifth¹¹⁰ has not been adequate to his merits. From a plebeian origin, he raised himself by his virtue and learning: the character of the man prevailed over the interest of the pope; and he sharpened those weapons which were soon pointed against the Roman church¹¹¹. He had been the friend of the most eminent scholars of the age: he became their patron; and such was the humility of his manners, that the change was scarcely discernible either to them or to himself. If he pressed

the acceptance of a liberal gift, it was not as the measure of desert, but as the proof of benevolence ; and when modest merit declined his bounty, “accept it,” would he say with a consciousness of his own worth ; “you will not always have a Nicholas among ye.” The influence of the holy see pervaded Christendom ; and he exerted that influence in the search, not of benefices, but of books. From the ruins of the Byzantine libraries, from the darkest monasteries of Germany and Britain, he collected the dusty manuscripts of the writers of antiquity ; and wherever the original could not be removed, a faithful copy was transcribed and transmitted for his use. The Vatican, the old repository for bulls and legends, for superstition and forgery, was daily replenished with more precious furniture ; and such was the industry of Nicholas, that in a reign of eight years, he formed a library of five thousand volumes. To his munificence, the Latin world was indebted for the versions of Xenophon, Diodorus, Polybius, Thucydides, Herodotus, and Appian ; of Strabo’s geography, of the Iliad, of the most valuable works of Plato and Aristotle, of Ptolemy and Theophrastus, and of the fathers of the Greek church. The example of the Roman pontiff was preceded or imitated by a Florentine merchant, who governed the republic without arms and without a title. Cosmo of Medicis¹¹² was the father of a line of princes, whose name and age are almost synonymous with the restoration of learning : his credit was ennobled into

Cosmo and
Lorenzo of
Medicis,
A. D.
1428—1492.

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fame; his riches were dedicated to the service of mankind; he corresponded at once with Cairo and London: and a cargo of Indian spices and Greek books was often imported in the same vessel. The genius and education of his grandson Lorenzo rendered him, not only a patron, but a judge and candidate, in the literary race. In his palace, distress was entitled to relief, and merit to reward: his leisure hours were delightfully spent in the Platonic academy: he encouraged the emulation of Demetrius Chalcocondyles and Angelo Politian; and his active missionary Janus Lascaris returned from the East with a treasure of two hundred manuscripts, fourscore of which were as yet unknown in the libraries of Europe¹¹³. The rest of Italy was animated by a similar spirit, and the progress of the nation repaid the liberality of her princes. The Latins held the exclusive property of their own literature: and these disciples of Greece were soon capable of transmitting and improving the lessons which they had imbibed. After a short succession of foreign teachers, the tide of emigration subsided; but the language of Constantinople was spread beyond the Alps; and the natives of France, Germany, and England¹¹⁴, imparted to their country the sacred fire which they had kindled in the schools of Florence and Rome¹¹⁵. In the productions of the mind, as in those of the soil, the gifts of nature are excelled by industry and skill: the Greek authors, forgotten on the

banks of the Ilissus, have been illustrated on those of the Elbe and the Thames: and Bessarion or Gaza might have envied the superior science of the Barbarians; the accuracy of Budæus, the taste of Erasmus, the copiousness of Stephens, the erudition of Scaliger, the discernment of Reiske, or of Bentley. On the side of the Latins, the discovery of printing was a casual advantage: but this useful art has been applied by Aldus, and his innumerable successors, to perpetuate and multiply the works of antiquity¹¹⁶. A single manuscript imported from Greece is revived in ten thousand copies; and each copy is fairer than the original. In this form, Homer and Plato would peruse with more satisfaction their own writings: and their scholiasts must resign the prize to the labours of our western editors.

Before the revival of classic literature, the Barbarians in Europe were immersed in ignorance; and their vulgar tongues were marked with the rudeness and poverty of their manners. The students of the more perfect idioms of Rome and Greece, were introduced to a new world of light and science; to the society of the free and polished nations of antiquity; and to a familiar converse with those immortal men who spoke the sublime language of eloquence and reason. Such an intercourse must tend to refine the taste, and to elevate the genius of the moderns: and yet, from the first experiment, it might appear that the study of the ancients had given fetters,

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Use and
abuse of anti-
cient learn-
ing.

CHAPTER LXVI. rather than wings, to the human mind. However laudable, the spirit of imitation is of a servile cast; and the first disciples of the Greeks and Romans were a colony of strangers in the midst of their age and country. The minute and laborious diligence which explored the antiquities of remote times, might have improved or adorned the present state of society: the critic and metaphysician were the slaves of Aristotle; the poets, historians, and orators, were proud to repeat the thoughts and words of the Augustan age; the works of nature were observed with the eyes of Pliny and Theophrastus; and some Pagan votaries professed a secret devotion to the gods of Homer and Plato¹¹⁷. The Italians were oppressed by the strength and number of their ancient auxiliaries: the century after the deaths of Petrarch and Boccace was filled with a crowd of Latin imitators, who decently repose on our shelves; but in that æra of learning, it will not be easy to discern a real discovery of science, a work of invention or eloquence, in the popular language of the country¹¹⁸. But as soon as it had been deeply saturated with the celestial dew, the soil was quickened into vegetation and life; the modern idioms were refined: the classics of Athens and Rome inspired a pure taste and a generous emulation; and in Italy; as afterwards in France and England, the pleasing reign of poetry and fiction was succeeded by the light of speculative and experimental philosophy. Genius

may anticipate the season of maturity; but in the education of a people, as in that of an individual, memory must be exercised, before the powers of reason and fancy can be expanded; nor may the artist hope to equal or surpass, till he has learned to imitate, the works of his predecessors.

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Comparison
of Rome and
Constantinople.
people.

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Schism of the Greeks and Latins.—Reign and Character of Amurath the Second. — Crusade of Ladislaus King of Hungary. — His Defeat and Death. — John Huniades.—Scanderbeg.—Constantine Palæologus last Emperor of the East.

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Comparison
of Rome and
Constanti-
nople.

THE respective merits of Rome and Constantinople are compared and celebrated by an eloquent Greek the father of the Italian schools¹. The view of the ancient capital, the feat of his ancestors, surpassed the most sanguine expectations of Emanuel Chrysoloras; and he no longer blamed the exclamation of an old sophist, that Rome was the habitation, not of men, but of gods. Those gods, and those men, had long since vanished; but, to the eye of liberal enthusiasm, the majesty of ruin restored the image of her ancient prosperity. The monuments of the consuls and Cæsars, of the martyrs and apostles, engaged on all sides the curiosity of the philosopher and the Christian; and he confessed, that in every age the arms and the religion of Rome were destined to reign over the earth. While Chrysoloras admired the venerable beauties of the mother, he was not forgetful of his native, country, her fairest daughter, her Imperial colony; and the Byzantine patriot expatiates with zeal and truth, on the eternal advantages

advantages of nature, and the more transitory glories of art and dominion, which adorned, or had adorned, the city of Constantine. Yet the perfection of the copy still redounds (as he modestly observes) to the honour of the original, and parents are delighted to be renewed, and even excelled, by the superior merit of their children. "Constantinople," says the orator, "is situate on a commanding point, between Europe and Asia, between the Archipelago and the Euxine. By her interposition, the two seas, and the two continents, are united for the common benefit of nations; and the gates of commerce may be shut or opened at her command. The harbour, encompassed on all sides by the sea and the continent, is the most secure and capacious in the world. The walls and gates of Constantinople may be compared with those of Babylon: the towers are many; each tower is a solid and lofty structure; and the second wall, the outer fortification, would be sufficient for the defence and dignity of an ordinary capital. A broad and rapid stream may be introduced into the ditches; and the artificial island may be encompassed, like Athens², by land or water." Two strong and natural causes are alleged for the perfection of the model of new Rome. The royal founder reigned over the most illustrious nations of the globe; and in the accomplishment of his designs, the power of the Romans was combined with the art and science of the Greeks. Other cities have been reared to

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maturity by accident and time; their beauties are mingled with disorder and deformity; and the inhabitants, unwilling to remove from their natal spot, are incapable of correcting the errors of their ancestors, and the original vices of situation or climate. But the free idea of Constantinople was formed and executed by a single mind; and the primitive model was improved by the obedient zeal of the subjects and successors of the first monarch. The adjacent isles were stored with an inexhaustible supply of marble; but the various materials were transported from the most remote shores of Europe and Asia; and the public and private buildings, the palaces, churches, aqueducts, cisterns, porticoes, columns, baths, and hippodromes, were adapted to the greatness of the capital of the East. The superfluity of wealth was spread along the shores of Europe and Asia; and the Byzantine territory, as far as the Euxine, the Hellespont, and the long wall, might be considered as a populous suburb and a perpetual garden. In this flattering picture, the past and the present, the times of prosperity and decay, are artfully confounded; but a sigh and a confession escape from the orator, that his wretched country was the shadow and sepulchre of its former self. The works of ancient sculpture had been defaced by Christian zeal or Barbaric violence; the fairest structures were demolished; and the marbles of Paros or Numidia were burnt for lime, or applied to the meanest uses. Of many a statue, the place was marked by an empty pedestal; of

many a column, the size was determined by a broken capital; the tombs of the emperors were scattered on the ground; the stroke of time was accelerated by storms and earthquakes; and the vacant space was adorned, by vulgar tradition, with fabulous monuments of gold and silver. From these wonders, which lived only in memory or belief, he distinguishes however the porphyry pillar, the column and colossus of Justinian³, and the church, more especially the dome, of St. Sophia; the best conclusion, since it could not be described according to its merits, and after it no other object could deserve to be mentioned. But he forgets, that a century before, the trembling fabrics of the colossus and the church had been saved and supported by the timely care of Andronicus the elder. Thirty years after the emperor had fortified St. Sophia with two new buttresses or pyramids, the eastern hemisphere suddenly gave way; and the images, the altars, and the sanctuary, were crushed by the falling ruin. The mischief indeed was speedily repaired; the rubbish was cleared by the incessant labour of every rank and age; and the poor remains of riches and industry were consecrated by the Greeks to the most stately and venerable temple of the East⁴.

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The last hope of the falling city and empire was placed in the harmony of the mother and daughter, in the maternal tenderness of Rome, and the filial obedience of Constantinople. In the synod of Florence, the Greeks and Latins

The Greek
schism after
the council
of Florence,
A. D.
1440—1448.

CHAP. LXVII. had embraced, and subscribed, and promised; but these signs of friendship were perfidious or fruitless⁵; and the baseless fabric of the union vanished like a dream⁶. The emperor and his prelates returned home in the Venetian galleys; but as they touched at the Morea and the isles of Corfu and Lesbos, the subjects of the Latins complained that the pretended union would be an instrument of oppression. No sooner did they land on the Byzantine shore than they were saluted, or rather assailed, with a general murmur of zeal and discontent. During their absence, above two years, the capital had been deprived of its civil and ecclesiastical rulers: fanaticism fermented in anarchy; the most furious monks reigned over the conscience of women and bigots; and the hatred of the Latin name was the first principle of nature and religion. Before his departure for Italy, the emperor had flattered the city with the assurance of a prompt relief and a powerful succour; and the clergy, confident in their orthodoxy and science, had promised themselves and their flocks an easy victory over the blind shepherds of the West. The double disappointment exasperated the Greeks; the conscience of the subscribing prelates was awakened; the hour of temptation was past; and they had more to dread from the public resentment, than they could hope from the favour of the emperor or the pope. Instead of justifying their conduct, they deplored their weakness, professed their contrition, and cast themselves on the mercy of God and of their

brethren. To the reproachful question, what had been the event or the use of their Italian synod? they answered with sighs and tears, "Alas! we have made a new faith; we have exchanged piety for impiety; we have betrayed the immaculate sacrifice; and we are become *Azymites*." (The *Azymites* were those who celebrated the communion with unleavened bread; and I must retract or qualify the praise which I have bestowed on the growing philosophy of the times.) "Alas! we have been seduced by distress, by fraud, and by the hopes and fears of a transitory life. The hand that has signed the union should be cut off; and the tongue that has pronounced the Latin creed deserves to be torn from the root." The best proof of their repentance was an increase of zeal for the most trivial rites and the most incomprehensible doctrines; and an absolute separation from all, without excepting their prince, who preserved some regard for honour and consistency. After the decease of the patriarch Joseph, the archbishops of Heraclea and Trebizond had courage to refuse the vacant office; and cardinal Bessarion preferred the warm and comfortable shelter of the Vatican. The choice of the emperor and his clergy was confined to Metrophanes of Cyzicus: he was consecrated in St. Sophia, but the temple was vacant. The cross-bearers abdicated their service; the infection spread from the city to the villages; and Metrophanes discharged, without effect, some ecclesiastical thunders against a nation

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of schismatics. The eyes of the Greeks were directed to Mark of Ephesus, the champion of his country; and the sufferings of the holy confessor were repaid with a tribute of admiration and applause. His example and writings propagated the flame of religious discord; age and infirmity soon removed him from the world; but the gospel of Mark was not a law of forgiveness; and he requested with his dying breath, that none of the adherents of Rome might attend his obsequies or pray for his soul.

Zeal of the
Orientals
and Russians.

The schism was not confined to the narrow limits of the Byzantine empire. Secure under the Mamaluke sceptre, the three patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, assembled a numerous synod; disowned their representatives at Ferrara and Florence; condemned the creed and council of the Latins; and threatened the emperor of Constantinople with the censures of the Eastern church. Of the sectaries of the Greek communion, the Russians were the most powerful, ignorant, and superstitious. Their primate, the cardinal Isidore, hastened from Florence to Moscow⁷, to reduce the independent nation under the Roman yoke. But the Russian bishops had been educated at mount Athos; and the prince and people embraced the theology of their priests. They were scandalized by the title, the pomp, the Latin cross of the legate, the friend of those impious men who shaved their beards, and performed the divine office with gloves on their hands and rings on their fingers: Isidore was condemned by a

synod; his person was imprisoned in a monastery; and it was with extreme difficulty, that the cardinal could escape from the hands of a fierce and fanatic people⁸. The Russians refused a passage to the missionaries of Rome who aspired to convert the Pagans beyond the Tanais⁹; and their refusal was justified by the maxim, that the guilt of idolatry is less damnable than that of schism. The errors of the Bohemians were excused by their abhorrence for the pope; and a deputation of the Greek clergy solicited the friendship of those sanguinary enthusiasts¹⁰. While Eugenius triumphed in the union and orthodoxy of the Greeks, his party was contracted to the walls, or rather to the palace, of Constantinople. The zeal of Palæologus had been excited by interest; it was soon cooled by opposition: an attempt to violate the national belief might endanger his life and crown; nor could the pious rebels be destitute of foreign and domestic aid. The sword of his brother Demetrius, who in Italy had maintained a prudent and popular silence, was half unsheathed in the cause of religion; and Amurath, the Turkish sultan, was displeased and alarmed by the seeming friendship of the Greeks and Latins.

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“ Sultan Murad or Amurath, lived forty-nine,
 “ and reigned thirty years, six months, and eight
 “ days. He was a just and valiant prince, of a
 “ great soul, patient of labours, learned, merciful,
 “ religious, charitable; a lover and encourager
 “ of the studious, and of all who excelled in

Reign and
 character of
 Amurath II.
 A. D.
 1421 — 1451,
 February 9.

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“ any art or science; a good emperor, and a
 “ great general. No man obtained more or
 “ greater victories than Amurath: Belgrade alone
 “ withstood his attacks. Under his reign, the
 “ foldier was ever victorious, the citizen rich and
 “ secure. If he subdued any country, his first
 “ care was to build moschs and caravanferas,
 “ hospitals, and colleges. Every year he gave
 “ a thousand pieces of gold to the sons of the
 “ prophet; and sent two thousand five hundred
 “ to the religious persons of Mecca, Medina,
 “ and Jerufalem ”. ” This portrait is transcribed
 from the historian of the Othman empire: but
 the applause of a fervile and superstitious people
 has been lavished on the worst of tyrants; and
 the virtues of a sultan are often the vices most
 useful to himself, or most agreeable to his subjects.
 A nation ignorant of the equal benefits of liberty
 and law, must be awed by the flashes of arbitrary
 power; the cruelty of a despot will assume
 the character of justice; his profusion, of liberality;
 his obstinacy, of firmness. If the most reasonable
 excuse be rejected, few acts of obedience will be
 found impossible; and guilt must tremble, where
 innocence cannot always be secure. The tranquillity
 of the people, and the discipline of the troops,
 were best maintained by perpetual action
 in the field; war was the trade of the Janizaries:
 and those who survived the peril, and divided
 the spoil, applauded the generous ambition of
 their sovereign. To propagate the true religion,

was the duty of a faithful Musulman: the unbelievers were *his* enemies, and those of the prophet; and, in the hands of the Turks, the scymetar was the only instrument of conversion. Under these circumstances, however, the justice and moderation of Amurath are attested by his conduct, and acknowledged by the Christians themselves; who consider a prosperous reign and a peaceful death as the reward of his singular merits. In the vigour of his age and military power, he seldom engaged in war till he was justified by a previous and adequate provocation: the victorious sultan was disarmed by submission; and in the observance of treaties, his word was inviolate and sacred ¹². The Hungarians were commonly the aggressors; he was provoked by the revolt of Scanderbeg; and the perfidious Caramanian was twice vanquished, and twice pardoned, by the Ottoman monarch. Before he invaded the Morea, Thebes had been surprised by the despot: in the conquest of Thessalonica, the grandson of Bajazet might dispute the recent purchase of the Venetians; and after the first siege of Constantinople, the sultan was never tempted, by the distress, the absence, or the injuries of Palæologus, to extinguish the dying light of the Byzantine empire.

But the most striking feature in the life and character of Amurath, is the double abdication ^{His double abdication, A. D. 1442—1444.} of the Turkish throne; and, were not his motives debased by an alloy of superstition, we must praise the royal philosopher ¹³, who at the age

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of forty could discern the vanity of human greatness. Resigning the sceptre to his son, he retired to the pleasant residence of Magnesia; but he retired to the society of saints and hermits. It was not till the fourth century of the Hegira, that the religion of Mahomet had been corrupted by an institution so adverse to his genius; but in the age of the crusades, the various orders of Dervishes were multiplied by the example of the Christian, and even the Latin, monks ¹⁴. The lord of nations submitted to fast, and pray, and turn round in endless rotation with the fanatics, who mistook the giddiness of the head for the illumination of the spirit ¹⁵. But he was soon awakened from this dream of enthusiasm, by the Hungarian invasion; and his obedient son was the foremost to urge the public danger and the wishes of the people. Under the banner of their veteran leader, the Janizaries fought and conquered; but he withdrew from the field of Varna, again to pray, to fast, and to turn round with his Magnesian brethren. These pious occupations were again interrupted by the danger of the state. A victorious army disdained the inexperience of their youthful ruler: the city of Adrianople was abandoned to rapine and slaughter; and the unanimous divan implored his presence to appease the tumult, and prevent the rebellion, of the Janizaries. At the well-known voice of their master, they trembled and obeyed; and the reluctant sultan was compelled to support his splendid servitude, till, at the end of four years,

he was relieved by the angel of death. Age or
 disease, misfortune or caprice, have tempted
 several princes to descend from the throne; and
 they have had leisure to repent of their irretrievable
 step. But Amurath alone, in the full liberty of
 choice, after the trial of empire and solitude,
 has *repeated* his preference of a private life.

After the departure of his Greek brethren,
 Eugenius had not been unmindful of their
 temporal interest; and his tender regard for the
 Byzantine empire was animated by a just appre-
 hension of the Turks, who approached, and
 might soon invade, the borders of Italy. But
 the spirit of the crusades had expired; and the
 coldness of the Franks was not less unreasonable
 than their headlong passion. In the eleventh
 century, a fanatic monk could precipitate Europe
 on Asia for the recovery of the holy sepulchre;
 but in the fifteenth, the most pressing motives of
 religion and policy were insufficient to unite the
 Latins in the defence of Christendom. Germany
 was an inexhaustible store-house of men and
 arms ¹⁶: but that complex and languid body
 required the impulse of a vigorous hand; and
 Frederic the third was alike impotent in his per-
 sonal character and his Imperial dignity. A long
 war had impaired the strength, without satiating
 the animosity of France and England ¹⁷: but
 Philip, duke of Burgundy, was a vain and
 magnificent prince; and he enjoyed, without
 danger or expence, the adventurous piety of his
 subjects, who sailed, in a gallant fleet, from the

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Eugenius
 forms a
 league
 against the
 Turks,
 A. D. 1443.

C H A P. LXVII. coast of Flanders to the Hellespont. The maritime republics of Venice and Genoa were less remote from the scene of action; and their hostile fleets were associated under the standard of St. Peter. The kingdoms of Hungary and Poland, which covered as it were the interior pale of the Latin church, were the most nearly concerned to oppose the progress of the Turks. Arms were the patrimony of the Scythians and Sarmatians, and these nations might appear equal to the contest, could they point, against the common foe, those swords that were so wantonly drawn in bloody and domestic quarrels. But the same spirit was adverse to concord and obedience: a poor country and a limited monarch are incapable of maintaining a standing force; and the loose bodies of Polish and Hungarian horse were not armed with the sentiments and weapons which, on some occasions, have given irresistible weight to the French chivalry. Yet, on this side, the designs of the Roman pontiff, and the eloquence of cardinal Julian, his legate, were promoted by the circumstances of the times¹⁸; by the union of the two crowns on the head of Ladislaus¹⁹, a young and ambitious foldier; by the valour of an hero, whose name, the name of John Huniades, was already popular among the Christians, and formidable to the Turks. An endless treasure of pardons and indulgences was scattered by the legate; many private warriors of France and Germany enlisted under the holy banner; and the crusade derived some strength, or at least some reputation,

from the new allies, both of Europe and Asia. C H A P. LXVII.
 A fugitive despot of Servia exaggerated the distress and ardour of the Christians beyond the Danube, who would unanimously rise to vindicate their religion and liberty. The Greek emperor ²⁰, with a spirit unknown to his fathers, engaged to guard the Bosphorus, and to sally from Constantinople at the head of his national and mercenary troops. The sultan of Caramania ²¹ announced the retreat of Amurath, and a powerful diversion in the heart of Anatolia; and if the fleets of the West could occupy at the same moment the streights of the Hellespont, the Ottoman monarchy would be dissevered and destroyed. Heaven and earth must rejoice in the perdition of the miscreants; and the legate, with prudent ambiguity, instilled the opinion of the invisible, perhaps the visible, aid, of the Son of God, and his divine Mother.

Of the Polish and Hungarian diets, a religious war was the unanimous cry; and Ladislaus, after passing the Danube, led an army of his confederate subjects as far as Sophia, the capital of the Bulgarian kingdom. In this expedition they obtained two signal victories, which were justly ascribed to the valour and conduct of Huniades. In the first, with a vanguard of ten thousand men, he surprised the Turkish camp; in the second, he vanquished and made prisoner the most renowned of their generals, who possessed the double advantage of ground and numbers. The approach of winter, and the natural and artificial obstacles

Ladislaus, king of Poland and Hungary, marches against them.

C H A P. of mount Hæmus, arrested the progress of the
 LXVII. hero, who measured a narrow interval of six days march from the foot of the mountains to the hostile towers of Adrianople, and the friendly capital of the Greek empire. The retreat was undisturbed; and the entrance into Buda was at once a military and religious triumph. An ecclesiastical procession was followed by the king and his warriors on foot: he nicely balanced the merits and rewards of the two nations; and the pride of conquest was blended with the humble temper of Christianity. Thirteen *basshaws*, nine standards, and four thousand captives, were unquestionable trophies; and as all were willing to believe, and none were present to contradict, the crusaders multiplied, with unblushing confidence, the myriads of Turks whom they had left on the field of battle²². The most solid proof, and the most salutary consequence, of victory, was a deputation from the *divan* to solicit peace, to restore Servia, to ransom the prisoners, and to evacuate the Hungarian frontier. By this treaty, the rational objects of the war were obtained: the king, the despot, and Huniades himself, in the diet of Segedin, were satisfied with public and private emolument; a truce of ten years was concluded; and the followers of Jesus and Mahomet, who swore on the Gospel and the Koran, attested the word of God as the guardian of truth and the avenger of perfidy. In the place of the Gospel, the Turkish ministers had proposed to substitute the Eucharist, the real presence of the

The Turkish
 peace.

Catholic deity; but the Christians, refused to profane their holy mysteries; and a superstitious conscience is less forcibly bound by the spiritual energy, than by the outward and visible symbols, of an oath²³.

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During the whole transaction, the cardinal legate had observed a sullen silence, unwilling to approve, and unable to oppose, the consent of the king and people. But the diet was not dissolved before Julian was fortified by the welcome intelligence, that Anatolia was invaded by the Caramanian, and Thrace by the Greek emperor; that the fleets of Genoa, Venice, and Burgundy, were masters of the Hellespont; and that the allies, informed of the victory, and ignorant of the treaty, of Ladislaus, impatiently waited for the return of his victorious army. “And is it thus,” exclaimed the cardinal²⁴, “that you will desert their expectations and your own fortune! It is to them, to your God, and your fellow-Christians, that you have pledged your faith; and that prior obligation annihilates a rash and sacrilegious oath to the enemies of Christ. His vicar on earth is the Roman pontiff; without whose sanction you can neither promise nor perform. In his name I absolve your perjury and sanctify your arms: follow my footsteps in the paths of glory and salvation; and if still ye have scruples, devolve on my head the punishment and the sin.” This mischievous casuistry was seconded by his respectable character, and the levity of popular assemblies: war was

Violation of
the peace,
A. D. 1444.

C H A P. resolved, on the same spot where peace had so
 LXVII. lately been sworn; and, in the execution of the treaty, the Turks were assaulted by the Christians; to whom, with some reason, they might apply the epithet of infidels. The falsehood of Ladislaus to his word and oath, was palliated by the religion of the times: the most perfect, or at least the most popular, excuse would have been the success of his arms and the deliverance of the Eastern church. But the same treaty which should have bound his conscience, had diminished his strength. On the proclamation of the peace, the French and German volunteers departed with indignant murmurs: the Poles were exhausted by distant warfare, and perhaps disgusted with foreign command; and their palatines accepted the first licence, and hastily retired to their provinces and castles. Even Hungary was divided by faction, or restrained by a laudable scruple: and the relics of the crusade that marched in the second expedition, were reduced to an inadequate force of twenty thousand men. A Walachian chief, who joined the royal standard with his vassals, presumed to remark that their numbers did not exceed the hunting retinue that sometimes attended the sultan; and the gift of two horses of matchless speed, might admonish Ladislaus of his secret foresight of the event. But the despot of Servia, after the restoration of his country and children, was tempted by the promise of new realms; and the inexperience of the king, the enthusiasm of the legate, and the martial presumption of Huniades himself,

himself, were persuaded that every obstacle must yield to the invincible virtue of the sword and the cross. After the passage of the Danube, two roads might lead to Constantinople and the Hellespont; the one direct, abrupt, and difficult, through the mountains of Hæmus; the other more tedious and secure, over a level country, and along the shores of the Euxine; in which their flanks, according to the Scythian discipline, might always be covered by a moveable fortification of waggons. The latter was judiciously preferred: the Catholics marched through the plains of Bulgaria, burning, with wanton cruelty, the churches and villages of the Christian natives; and their last station was at Warna, near the sea-shore; on which the defeat and death of Ladislaus have bestowed a memorable name²⁵.

It was on this fatal spot, that, instead of finding a confederate fleet to second their operations, they were alarmed by the approach of Amurath himself, who had issued from his Magnesian solitude, and transported the forces of Asia to the defence of Europe. According to some writers, the Greek emperor had been awed, or seduced, to grant the passage of the Bosphorus; and an indelible stain of corruption is fixed on the Genoese, or the pope's nephew, the Catholic admiral, whose mercenary connivance betrayed the guard of the Hellespont. From Adrianople, the sultan advanced by hasty marches, at the head of sixty thousand men; and when the cardinal, and Huniades, had taken a nearer survey of the numbers

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Battle of
Warna,
A. D. 1444,
Nov. 10.

C H A P. and order of the Turks, these ardent warriors
 LXVII. proposed the tardy and impracticable measure of a retreat. The king alone was resolved to conquer or die; and his resolution had almost been crowned with a glorious and salutary victory. The princes were opposite to each other in the centre; and the Beglerbegs, or generals of Anatolia and Romania, commanded on the right and left against the adverse divisions of the despot and Huniades. The Turkish wings were broken on the first onset: but the advantage was fatal; and the rash victors, in the heat of the pursuit, were carried away far from the annoyance of the enemy or the support of their friends. When Amurath beheld the flight of his squadrons, he despaired of his fortune and that of the empire: a veteran Janizary seized his horse's bridle; and he had magnanimity to pardon and reward the soldier who dared to perceive the terror, and arrest the flight, of his sovereign. A copy of the treaty, the monument of Christian perfidy, had been displayed in the front of battle; and it is said, that the sultan in his distress, lifting his eyes and his hands to heaven, implored the protection of the God of truth; and called on the prophet Jesus himself to avenge the impious mockery of his name and religion²⁶. With inferior numbers and disordered ranks, the king of Hungary rushed forwards in the confidence of victory, till his career was stopped by the impenetrable phalanx of the Janizaries. If we may credit the Ottoman annals, his horse was pierced by the javelin of

Amurath ²⁷; he fell among the spears of the infantry; and a Turkish soldier proclaimed with a loud voice, "Hungarians, behold the head of your king!" The death of Ladislaus was the signal of their defeat. On his return from an intemperate pursuit, Huniades deplored his error and the public loss: he strove to rescue the royal body, till he was overwhelmed by the tumultuous crowd of the victors and vanquished; and the last efforts of his courage and conduct were exerted to save the remnant of his Walachian cavalry. Ten thousand Christians were slain in the disastrous battle of Warna: the loss of the Turks, more considerable in numbers, bore a smaller proportion to their total strength; yet the philosophic sultan was not ashamed to confess, that his ruin must be the consequence of a second and similar victory. At his command a column was erected on the spot where Ladislaus had fallen; but the modest inscription, instead of accusing the rashness, recorded the valour, and bewailed the misfortune, of the Hungarian youth ²⁸.

Before I lose sight of the field of Warna, I am tempted to pause on the character and story of two principal actors, the cardinal Julian and John Huniades. Julian ²⁹ Cæsarini was born of a noble family of Rome: his studies had embraced both the Latin and Greek learning, both the sciences of divinity and law; and his versatile genius was equally adapted to the schools, the camp, and the court. No sooner had he been invested with the Roman purple, than he was sent into

C H A P.
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Death of Ladislaus.

The cardinal Julian.

CHAP. LXVII. Germany to arm the empire against the rebels and heretics of Bohemia. The spirit of persecution is unworthy of a Christian; the military profession ill becomes a priest; but the former is excused by the times; and the latter was ennobled by the courage of Julian, who stood dauntless and alone in the disgraceful flight of the German host. As the pope's legate, he opened the council of Basil; but the president soon appeared the most strenuous champion of ecclesiastical freedom; and an opposition of seven years was conducted by his ability and zeal. After promoting the strongest measures against the authority and person of Eugenius, some secret motive of interest or conscience engaged him to desert on a sudden the popular party. The cardinal withdrew himself from Basil to Ferrara; and, in the debates of the Greeks and Latins, the two nations admired the dexterity of his arguments and the depth of his theological erudition³⁰. In his Hungarian embassy we have already seen the mischievous effects of his sophistry and eloquence, of which Julian himself was the first victim. The cardinal, who performed the duties of a priest and a soldier, was lost in the defeat of Warna. The circumstances of his death are variously related; but it is believed, that a weighty incumbrance of gold impeded his flight, and tempted the cruel avarice of some Christian fugitives.

John Corvinus Huniades.

From an humble, or at least a doubtful origin, the merit of John Huniades promoted him to the command of the Hungarian armies. His father

was a Walachian, his mother a Greek; her unknown race might possibly ascend to the emperors of Constantinople; and the claims of the Walachians, with the surname of Corvinus, from the place of his nativity, might suggest a thin pretence for mingling his blood with the patricians of ancient Rome³¹. In his youth he served in the wars of Italy; and was retained, with twelve horsemen, by the bishop of Zagrad: the valour of the *white knight*³² was soon conspicuous; he increased his fortunes by a noble and wealthy marriage; and in the defence of the Hungarian borders, he won in the same year three battles against the Turks. By his influence, Ladislaus of Poland obtained the crown of Hungary; and the important service was rewarded by the title and office of Waivod of Transylvania. The first of Julian's crusades added two Turkish laurels on his brow; and in the public distress the fatal errors of Warna were forgotten. During the absence and minority of Ladislaus of Austria, the titular king, Huniades was elected supreme captain and governor of Hungary, and if envy at first was silenced by terror, a reign of twelve years supposes the arts of policy as well as of war. Yet the idea of a consummate general is not delineated in his campaigns, the white knight fought with the hand rather than the head, as the chief of desultory Barbarians, who attack without fear and fly without shame; and his military life is composed of a romantic alternative of victories and escapes. By the Turks, who

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employed his name to frighten their perverse children, he was corruptly denominated *Jancus Lain*, or the Wicked: their hatred is the proof of their esteem; the kingdom which he guarded was inaccessible to their arms; and they felt him most daring and formidable, when they fondly believed the captain and his country irrecoverably lost. Instead of confining himself to a defensive war, four years after the defeat of Warna he again penetrated into the heart of Bulgaria; and in the plain of Cossova sustained, till the third day, the shock of the Ottoman army, four times more numerous than his own. As he fled alone through the woods of Walachia, the hero was surprised by two robbers; but while they disputed a gold chain that hung at his neck, he recovered his sword, slew the one, terrified the other, and, after new perils of captivity or death, consoled by his presence an afflicted kingdom. But the last and most glorious action of his life was the defence of Belgrade against the powers of Mahomet the second in person. After a siege of forty days, the Turks, who had already entered the town, were compelled to retreat; and the joyful nations celebrated Huniades and Belgrade as the bulwarks of Christendom³³. About a month after this great deliverance, the champion expired; and his most splendid epitaph is the regret of the Ottoman prince, who sighed that he could no longer hope for revenge against the single antagonist who had triumphed over his arms. On the first vacancy of the throne,

His defence
of Belgrade,
and death,
A. D. 1456,
July 22,
Sept. 4.

Matthias Corvinus, a youth of eighteen years of age, was elected and crowned by the grateful Hungarians. His reign was prosperous and long: Matthias aspired to the glory of a conqueror and a saint; but his purest merit is the encouragement of learning; and the Latin orators and historians, who were invited from Italy by the son, have shed the lustre of their eloquence on the father's character³⁴.

In the list of heroes, John Huniades and Scanderbeg are commonly associated³⁵: and they are both entitled to our notice, since their occupation of the Ottoman arms delayed the ruin of the Greek empire. John Castriot, the father of Scanderbeg³⁶, was the hereditary prince of a small district of Epirus or Albania, between the mountains and the Adriatic sea. Unable to contend with the sultan's power, Castriot submitted to the hard conditions of peace and tribute: he delivered his four sons as the pledges of his fidelity; and the Christian youths, after receiving the mark of circumcision, were instructed in the Mahometan religion, and trained in the arms and arts of Turkish policy³⁷. The three elder brothers were confounded in the crowd of slaves; and the poison to which their deaths are ascribed, cannot be verified or disproved by any positive evidence. Yet the suspicion is in a great measure removed by the kind and paternal treatment of George Castriot, the fourth brother, who from his tender youth, displayed the strength and spirit of a soldier. The successive overthrow

Birth and education of Scanderbeg, prince of Albania, A. D. 1404—1413, etc.

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of a Tartar and two Persians, who carried a proud defiance to the Turkish court, recommended him to the favour of Amurath, and his Turkish appellation of Scanderbeg (*Iskender Beg*), or the lord Alexander, is an indelible memorial of his glory and servitude. His father's principality was reduced into a province: but the loss was compensated by the rank and title of Sanjak, a command of five thousand horse, and the prospect of the first dignities of the empire. He served with honour in the wars of Europe and Asia; and we may smile at the art or credulity of the historian, who supposes, that in every encounter he spared the Christians, while he fell with a thundering arm on his Musulman foes. The glory of Huniades is without reproach; he fought in the defence of his religion and country; but the enemies who applaud the patriot, have branded his rival with the name of traitor and apostate. In the eyes of the Christians, the rebellion of Scanderbeg is justified by his father's wrongs, the ambiguous death of his three brothers, his own degradation, and the slavery of his country; and they adore the generous, though tardy, zeal, with which he asserted the faith and independence of his ancestors. But he had imbibed from his ninth year the doctrines of the Koran; he was ignorant of the Gospel; the religion of a soldier is determined by authority and habit; nor is it easy to conceive what new illumination at the age of forty³⁸ could be poured into his soul. His motives would be less exposed to the suspicion of interest or revenge, had he broken his chain from the

moment that he was sensible of its weight: but a long oblivion had surely impaired his original right; and every year of obedience and reward had cemented the mutual bond of the sultan and his subject. If Scanderbeg had long harboured the belief of Christianity and the intention of revolt, a worthy mind must condemn the base dissimulation, that could serve only to betray, that could promise only to be foresworn, that could actively join in the temporal and spiritual perdition of so many thousands of his unhappy brethren. Shall we praise a secret correspondence with Huniades, while he commanded the vanguard of the Turkish army? shall we excuse the desertion of his standard, a treacherous desertion which abandoned the victory to the enemies of his benefactor? In the confusion of a defeat, the eye of Scanderbeg was fixed on the Reis Effendi or principal secretary: with the dagger at his breast, he extorted a firman or patent for the government of Albania; and the murder of the guiltless scribe and his train, prevented the consequences of an immediate discovery. With some bold companions, to whom he had revealed his design, he escaped in the night, by rapid marches, from the field of battle to his paternal mountains. The gates of Croya were opened to the royal mandate; and no sooner did he command the fortrefs, than George Castriot dropt the mask of dissimulation; abjured the prophet and the sultan, and proclaimed himself the avenger of his family and country. The names of religion

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His revolt
from the
Turks,
A. D. 1443,
Nov. 28.

C H A P. and liberty provoked a general revolt: the Al-
 LXVII. banians, a martial race, were unanimous to live
 and die with their hereditary prince; and the
 Ottoman garrisons were indulged in the choice of
 martyrdom or baptism. In the assembly of the
 states of Epirus, Scanderbeg was elected general
 of the Turkish war; and each of the allies en-
 gaged to furnish his respective proportion of men
 and money. From these contributions, from his
 patrimonial estate, and from the valuable salt-pits of
 Selina, he drew an annual revenue of two hundred
 thousand ducats³⁹; and the entire sum, exempt from
 the demands of luxury, was strictly appropriated to
 the public use. His manners were popular; but his
 discipline was severe; and every superfluous
 vice was banished from his camp: his example
 strengthened his command; and under his con-
 duct, the Albanians were invincible in their own
 opinion and that of their enemies. The bravest
 adventurers of France and Germany were allured
 by his fame and retained in his service: his
 standing militia consisted of eight thousand horse
 and seven thousand foot; the horses were small,
 the men were active: but he viewed with a
 discerning eye the difficulties and resources of the
 mountains; and, at the blaze of the beacons, the
 whole nation was distributed in the strongest
 posts. With such unequal arms, Scanderbeg
 resisted twenty-three years the powers of the
 Ottoman empire; and two conquerors, Amurath
 the second, and his greater son, were repeatedly
 baffled by a rebel, whom they pursued with

His valour,

seeming contempt and implacable resentment. At the head of sixty thousand horse and forty thousand Janizaries, Amurath entered Albania; he might ravage the open country, occupy the defenceless towns, convert the churches into moschs, circumcise the Christian youths, and punish with death his adult and obstinate captives: but the conquests of the sultan were confined to the petty fortrefs of Sfetigrade; and the garrison, invincible to his arms, was oppressed by a paltry artifice and a superstitious scruple⁴⁰. Amurath retired with shame and loss from the walls of Croya, the castle and residence of the Castriots; the march, the siege, the retreat, were harassed by a vexatious, and almost invisible, adversary⁴¹; and the disappointment might tend to embitter, perhaps to shorten, the last days of the sultan⁴². In the fulness of conquest, Mahomet the second still felt at his bosom this domestic thorn: his lieutenants were permitted to negotiate a truce; and the Albanian prince may justly be praised as a firm and able champion of his national independence. The enthusiasm of chivalry and religion has ranked him with the names of Alexander and Pyrrhus; nor would they blush to acknowledge their intrepid countrymen: but his narrow dominion, and slender powers, must leave him at an humble distance below the heroes of antiquity, who triumphed over the East and the Roman legions. His splendid atchievements, the bashas whom he encountered, the armies that he discomfited, and the three thousand Turks who

C H A P. LXVII. were slain by his single hand, must be weighed in the scales of suspicious criticism. Against an illiterate enemy, and in the dark solitude of Epirus, his partial biographers may safely indulge the latitude of romance: but their fictions are exposed by the light of Italian history; and they afford a strong presumption against their own truth, by a fabulous tale of his exploits, when he passed the Adriatic with eight hundred horse to the succour of the king of Naples⁴³. Without disparagement to his fame, they might have owned that he was finally oppressed by the Ottoman powers: in his extreme danger, he applied to pope Pius the second for a refuge in the ecclesiastical state; and his resources were almost exhausted, since Scanderbeg died a fugitive at Lissus on the Venetian territory⁴⁴. His sepulchre was soon violated by the Turkish conquerors; but the Janizaries, who wore his bones enchased in a bracelet, declared by this superstitious amulet their involuntary reverence for his valour. The instant ruin of his country may redound to the hero's glory; yet, had he balanced the consequences of submission and resistance, a patriot perhaps would have declined the unequal contest which must depend on the life and genius of one man. Scanderbeg might indeed be supported by the rational, though fallacious, hope, that the pope, the king of Naples, and the Venetian republic, would join in the defence of a free and Christian people, who guarded the sea-coast of the Adriatic, and the narrow passage

and death,
A. D. 1467,
January 17.

from Greece to Italy. His infant son was saved from the national shipwreck; the Castriots⁴⁵ were invested with a Neapolitan dukedom, and their blood continues to flow in the noblest families of the realm. A colony of Albanian fugitives obtained a settlement in Calabria, and they preserve at this day the language and manners of their ancestors⁴⁶.

In the long career of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, I have reached at length the last reign of the princes of Constantinople, who so feebly sustained the name and majesty of the Cæsars. On the decease of John Palæologus, who survived about four years the Hungarian crusade⁴⁷, the royal family, by the death of Andronicus and the monastic profession of Isidore, was reduced to three princes, Constantine, Demetrius, and Thomas, the surviving sons of the emperor Manuel. Of these the first and the last were far distant in the Morea; but Demetrius, who possessed the domain of Selybria, was in the suburbs, at the head of a party: his ambition was not chilled by the public distress; and his conspiracy with the Turks and the schismatics had already disturbed the peace of his country. The funeral of the late emperor was accelerated with singular and even suspicious haste; the claim of Demetrius to the vacant throne was justified by a trite and flimsy sophism, that he was born in the purple, the eldest son of his father's reign. But the empress-mother, the senate and soldiers, the clergy and people, were unanimous in the

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Constantine,
the last of the
Roman or
Greek empe-
rors,
A. D. 1448,
Nov. 1—
A. D. 1453,
May 29.

C H A P. cause of the lawful successor; and the despot
 LXVII. Thomas, who, ignorant of the change, accidentally returned to the capital, asserted with becoming zeal the interest of his absent brother. An ambassador, the historian Phranza, was immediately dispatched to the court of Adrianople. Amurath received him with honour and dismissed him with gifts; but the gracious approbation of the Turkish sultan announced his supremacy, and the approaching downfall of the Eastern empire. By the hands of two illustrious deputies, the Imperial crown was placed at Sparta on the head of Constantine. In the spring he sailed from the Morea, escaped the encounter of a Turkish squadron, enjoyed the acclamations of his subjects, celebrated the festival of a new reign, and exhausted by his donatives the treasure, or rather the indigence, of the state. The emperor immediately resigned to his brothers the possession of the Morea, and the brittle friendship of the two princes, Demetrius and Thomas, was confirmed in their mother's presence by the frail security of oaths and embraces. His next occupation was the choice of a consort. A daughter of the doge of Venice had been proposed; but the Byzantine nobles objected the distance between an hereditary monarch and an elective magistrate; and in their subsequent distress, the chief of that powerful republic was not unmindful of the affront. Constantine afterwards hesitated between the royal families of Trebizond and Georgia; and the embassy of Phranza represents

in his public and private life the last days of the C H A P.
Byzantine empire ⁴⁸.

LXVII.

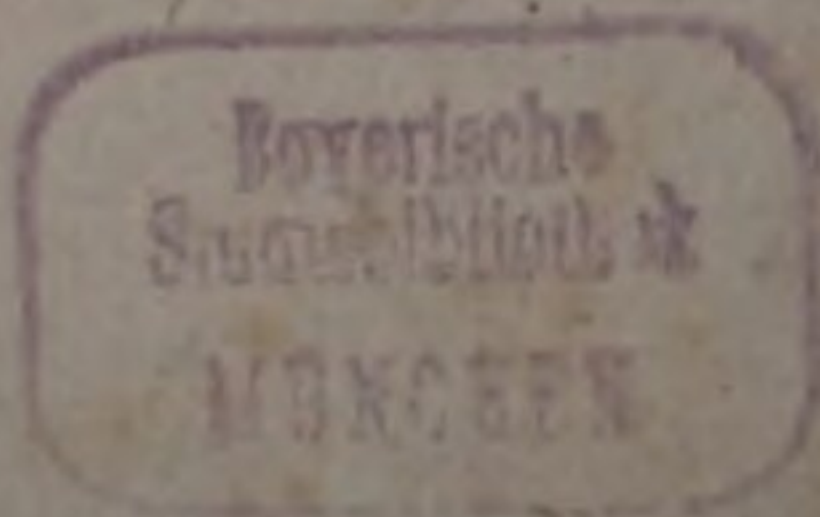
The *protovestiare*, or great chamberlain, Phranza Embassies of
Phranza,
A. D.
1450—1452. failed from Constantinople as the minister of a bridegroom; and the relics of wealth and luxury were applied to his pompous appearance. His numerous retinue consisted of nobles and guards, of physicians and monks; he was attended by a band of music; and the term of his costly embassy was protracted above two years. On his arrival in Georgia or Iberia, the natives from the towns and villages flocked around the strangers; and such was their simplicity, that they were delighted with the effects, without understanding the cause, of musical harmony. Among the crowd was an old man, above an hundred years of age, who had formerly been carried away a captive by the Barbarians ⁴⁹, and who amused his hearers with a tale of the wonders of India ⁵⁰, from whence he had returned to Portugal by an unknown sea ⁵¹. From this hospitable land, Phranza proceeded to the court of Trebizond, where he was informed by the Greek prince of the recent decease of Amurath. Instead of rejoicing in the deliverance, the experienced statesman expressed his apprehension, that an ambitious youth would not long adhere to the sage and pacific system of his father. After the sultan's decease, his Christian wife Maria ⁵², the daughter of the Servian despot, had been honourably restored to her parents: on the fame of her beauty and merit, she was recommended by the ambassador as the most worthy

C H A P. LXVII. object of the royal choice; and Phranza recapitulates and refutes the specious objections that might be raised against the proposal. The majesty of the purple would ennoble an unequal alliance; the bar of affinity might be removed by liberal alms and the dispensation of the church; the disgrace of Turkish nuptials had been repeatedly overlooked; and, though the fair Maria was near fifty years of age, she might yet hope to give an heir to the empire. Constantine listened to the advice, which was transmitted in the first ship that sailed from Trebizond; but the factions of the court opposed his marriage; and it was finally prevented by the pious vow of the sultana, who ended her days in the monastic profession. Reduced to the first alternative, the choice of Phranza was decided in favour of a Georgian princess; and the vanity of her father was dazzled by the glorious alliance. Instead of demanding, according to the primitive and national custom, a price for his daughter^s, he offered a portion of fifty-six thousand, with an annual pension of five thousand, ducats, and the services of the ambassador were repaid by an assurance, that, as his son had been adopted in baptism by the emperor, the establishment of his daughter should be the peculiar care of the empress of Constantinople. On the return of Phranza, the treaty was ratified by the Greek monarch, who with his own hand impressed three vermilion crosses on the golden bull, and assured the Georgian envoy, that in the spring his gallies should conduct the
bride

bride to her Imperial palace. But Constantine C H A P.
 embraced his faithful servant, not with the cold LXVII.
 approbation of a sovereign, but with the warm
 confidence of a friend, who, after a long absence,
 is impatient to pour his secrets into the bosom
 of his friend. "Since the death of my mother and State of the
 " of Cantacuzene, who alone advised me without Byzantine
 " interest or passion", I am surrounded," said court.
 the emperor, "by men whom I can neither
 " love, nor trust, nor esteem. You are not a
 " stranger to Lucas Notaras, the great admiral;
 " obstinately attached to his own sentiments, he
 " declares, both in private and public, that his
 " sentiments are the absolute measure of my
 " thoughts and actions. The rest of the courtiers
 " are swayed by their personal or factious views;
 " and how can I consult the monks on questions
 " of policy and marriage? I have yet much em-
 " ployment for your diligence and fidelity. In
 " the spring you shall engage one of my brothers
 " to solicit the succour of the Western powers;
 " from the Morea you shall sail to Cyprus on a
 " particular commission; and from thence proceed
 " to Georgia to receive and conduct the future
 " empress." "Your commands," replied Phranza,
 "are irresistible; but deign, great sir," he added,
 with a serious smile, "to consider, that if I am
 " thus perpetually absent from my family, my
 " wife may be tempted either to seek another
 " husband, or to throw herself into a monastery."
 After laughing at his apprehensions, the empe-
 ror more gravely consoled him by the pleasing

C H A P. LXVII. assurance, that *this* should be his last service abroad, and that he destined for his son, a wealthy and noble heiress; for himself, the important office of great logothete, or principal minister of state. The marriage was immediately stipulated; but the office, however incompatible with his own, had been usurped by the ambition of the admiral. Some delay was requisite to negociate a consent and an equivalent; and the nomination of Phranza was half declared, and half suppressed, lest it might be displeasing to an insolent and powerful favourite. The winter was spent in the preparations of his embassy; and Phranza had resolved, that the youth his son should embrace this opportunity of foreign travel, and be left, on the appearance of danger, with his maternal kindred of the Morea. Such were the private and public designs, which were interrupted by a Turkish war, and finally buried in the ruins of the empire.

END OF THE ELEVENTH VOLUME.





Gibbon, Edward, 1737-1794

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